Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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NOTICE TO READERS: On 6 May 1991, the DAILY REPORT will begin phasing in new radio and television sourcelines that reflect how a station identifies itself. This change eliminates the "Domestic Service" and "Television Service" designations in favor of the station identification as broadcast. The presence of a new sourceline reflects this change in policy, rather than the establishment of a new station or network.

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Arab League Council Holds 95th Meeting in Cairo

Kuwaiti, Iraqi Ministers Speak

NC1505135291 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpts] The ministerial meeting of the Arab League's 95th session opened with a speech by the session chairman, Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Salim al-Sabah.

In his speech, he praised Egypt's role in the liberation of Kuwait, condemned Iraqi measures during the occupation, noted the damage to the Palestinian cause as a result of the Gulf crisis, and asserted the need to adhere to legitimacy, justice, the Arab League Charter, and the joint Arab defense pact.

He said that the election of 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid as Arab League secretary general comes within the context of Egypt's continuous contribution on the Arab level and that this election is commensurate with the requirements of the forthcoming stage. [passage omitted]

Former Arab League Acting Secretary General As'ad al-As'ad; the foreign ministers of Oman, Qatar, Jordan, and Lebanon; the secretary general of the Libyan Popular Committee for Foreign Liaison; and the Iraqi minister of state for foreign affairs also addressed the session.

The Iraqi minister congratulated Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid and said that Iraq's intention is to deal with matters reasonably, adding: We do not want to open the file of the past. He noted that Iraq has always been clearly committed to its Arab policy, which is based on unifying the ranks and healing the wounds.

The Arab League Council session adjourned until 1600 today.

Kuwaiti, Iraqi Dispute Reported

JN1505132091 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 15 May 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Excerpt] The Arab League Ministerial Council began its meetings in Cairo this morning. Egyptian Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid was unanimously elected Arab League secretary general.

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim, who chaired the meeting, delivered a speech in which he vehemently criticized Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. This made Iraqi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf reply to the Kuwaiti minister, stating that his speech runs counter to the trend of clearing Arab atmospheres and restoring unity to Arab ranks. He said: Those who want to reopen files should do so from the first page. He added: We are ready to do so because we have our evidence. He stressed that Iraq is clearly proceeding toward closing Arab ranks and healing wounds.

The Iraqi minister turned his back on the Kuwaiti minister while the latter was delivering his speech and busied himself talking to members of his delegation. [passage omitted]

Further on Dispute

NC1505164591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2350 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpts] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has expressed his great pleasure at the resumption of the 95th session of the Arab League Council in the fraternal Arab Republic of Egypt, the cradle of civilization, the beacon of the Arab nation, and the permanent home of all the Arabs.

In a speech delivered at the Arab League Council meeting this morning the Kuwaiti foreign minister noted that Iraq's crimes and violation of sanctities, properties, and norms; its murders; its continuing detention of Kuwaiti nationals; its destruction of establishments; and its burning of oil installations and oil wells have surpassed in their ugliness the lowest level of hatred known in history. The harmful effects of these practices have spread to the Arab and Islamic worlds and to the world at large.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister, who is the chairman of the current session of the Arab League, said that this disaster will remain a lesson and a severe test for the Arab nation and for the extent of its adherence to its principles and charters, its concern for its organizations and common objectives, and its upholding of its traditions and its Arab and Islamic values. We should learn a lesson from this disaster to build a better future that will enable the Arab League to achieve its aspirations and hopes and that will protect our Arab world from the weakness that has struck it.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister said: As the amir of Kuwait has stated, the majority of the Arab states and the majority of the Arab people have proved that brotherhood and fraternity are not empty words but a firm faith that proves itself clearly during hardships and ordeals. The Arab states—their leaders, people, armies, and capabilities—were against aggression and supported Kuwaiti rights. They worked to liberate Kuwait's territory and restore its legitimacy.

He added: Honesty dictates that we should not forget that some people have contributed to the breaking of Arab ranks. These people should bear the historic responsibility for their acts.

He said: If the Arabs had unanimously agreed on supporting the goals and charters of the Arab League, the Arab nation's plight would not have deteriorated to the current level of discord and dissension, and the suffering

of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territory would not have worsened as a result of this split and weakness which has struck the unity and cohesion of the Arab ranks.

He said: We must renew the commitment to the provisions of the Arab League Charter. We must discard abnormal and aggressive policies and make accountable those who violate and depart from the letter and spirit of our Arab charters and treaties.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister noted that the Palestinian issue requires a peaceful and just solution that will establish justice and peace and extract the Arab region from the hotbed of tension and dispute.

Concluding, the Kuwaiti foreign minister said: We are confident that Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid's great expertise in the field of Arab and international action and his distinguished dedication in support of Arab issues and joint Arab action make him the man of this stage, who will rebuild confidence, reactivate the role of the Secretariat General of the Arab League, serve our national objectives, and rejuvenate the Arab League. [passage omitted]

Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, Iraqi minister of state for foreign affairs and head of the Iraqi delegation, also delivered a speech. He criticized the speech made by Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti foreign minister and chairman of the current session.

Al-Sahhaf said: Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid spoke about Arab solidarity and called for cementing the ranks, discarding differences, and healing wounds, yet the Kuwaiti representative tried to reopen the wounds and to add new wounds to the old ones. We have come to redress the wounds and to deal with them objectively. We agree with the secretary general.

He added: Those who want to reopen files should begin at the first page. We are ready to do so because we have evidence, files, and documents. He said that Iraq must not be attacked like this, noting that war and aggression against Iraq were not waged only with tanks and bombs. Iraq was also subjected to an blockade to strangle it economically. Iraq came under enormous pressure.

He said: We support the secretary general's speech calling for reason and objectivity. Iraq clearly supports the closing of ranks. [passage omitted]

Second Session Postpones Discussions

NC1505165091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1443 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—The Arab League Council resumed its meetings this afternoon. The session was limited to the foreign ministers and was devoted to discussing topics on the agenda.

After the approximately 20-minute meeting, Bahraini Foreign Minister Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Mubarak stated that the Arab delegation heads had agreed to postpone discussion of the current session's agenda until the next session, due to be held in September.

Kuwaiti Minister, 'Abd-al-Majid Comment

NC1505171491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Shaykh Salim al-Sabah, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister and chairman of the current session of the Arab League Council, has disclosed that the council at the foreign minister level decided at its meeting this afternoon to postpone discussing the topics on its agenda until the September session, due to the importance of these topics and in order to give the league secretary general a chance to consult about these topics.

Shaykh Salim al-Sabah and Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said this at a news conference at the end of the council's session this evening.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid expressed his thanks and appreciation for the confidence of the Arab countries' foreign ministers in him and noted that gestures of consensus and unity will bring about a unified Arab stand.

He said that the league council delegated the secretary general to make a decision about some urgent issues, asserting that he will do his utmost in the forthcoming stage and that he is confident of the support of ministers, colleagues, and those working in the league bodies for him.

He pointed out that Arab solidarity was honorably manifested during the meeting and stressed the unity of Arab word, noting that this was a good omen.

He said that there is a collective desire to (?clear) the Arab atmosphere and to find means for joint Arab action.

Commenting on the international peace conference, 'Abd-al-Majid said it was not discussed because it was not on the agenda, noting that this subject is not in the council's framework.

About the tour the Arab League secretary general is to conduct, he said less than 24 hours have elapsed since he took the post and that he has not yet made any decisions about that tour.

Jordan's Al-Masri Delivers Speech

JN1505182491 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1545 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (PETRA)—Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri delivered a speech at the beginning of the meetings of the 95th Arab League session, which began in Cairo today at the foreign ministers level. The following is the text:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. Mr. President, Mr. Acting Secretary General:

First, I would like to express my pleasure with our gathering today under the umbrella of our Arab League, which we wish continuous progress to attain the objectives of its charter and to be the effective pan-Arab institution capable of enhancing Arab solidarity and giving it a new dimension that would bring blessings and good fortune to the sons of our nation.

Mr. President, I wish you success in conducting this session in order to attain good results. At the same time, I note my appreciation of the acting secretary general and his colleagues in the secretariat on the sincere efforts they have exerted in the past months. I reiterate my appreciation and gratitude to sisterly Tunisia for all its efforts throughout the years it hosted the Arab League.

Mr. President: In the name of Jordan and on my personal behalf, I congratulate brother Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid with a worthy trust and my confidence that, judging by his experience, broad knowledge, and sincere loyalty to his nation he is capable of fulfilling his honorable duty. I would like to stress Jordan's sincere cooperation in everything that would help him perform the tasks of his post and back his efforts to safeguard the Arab household, unify the Arabs, and achieve reconciliation.

No doubt, our consensus in choosing Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid for this lofty post consolidates our confidence in his qualifications, and embodies our concern to entrench the role of our pan-Arab institution.

Mr. President. The spirit that brought us to Cairo today means that we have the sincere intention to exert all efforts in support of the Arab League. This represents the comprehensive Arab belief that joint Arab action and Arab solidarity are two ideas which must be taken from the literature of Arab politics to the stage of sincere action on the ground. If the league represents the comprehensive pan-Arab framework, then it needs the political will of its members to achieve the change that would enable it and its institutions to accomplish the aspired-for prosperity for our nation, and to be the Arab household in which solidarity is protected from any rifts; thus, paving the way for positive points of agreement within the Arab family.

If the league's role requires rapid and persistent action to restore cohesiveness to Arab relations, then there are realistic and objective facts that call for such rapid action. The international approach that calls for establishing more peace and security in the world places the Arab-Israeli conflict and its essence—the Palestine question—as a top priority. This calls for a unified Arab support that would acquire its strength from the call to establish lasting, comprehensive, and just peace by implementing international legitimacy based on the principle of territory for peace.

On the other hand, sincere Arab solidarity is the basis that would give our nation a more significant presence when the features of the new world order are drawn. We must benefit from the meanings of the changes in the world during the past three years, among which are the international imbalance, the disappearance of some ideologies, what happened during the Gulf war, and the rapid changes in the world order. Moreover, we must know that openness and attempts to appreciate all the new developments are better than retreat. Reassessing the Arab situation is necessary to begin positive Arab interaction with the international sphere. At this stage, we must unify elements of power and apply effective and objective influence so as to be participants and not spectators when the principles of this new world order are put in place.

Again, I would like to emphasize that we in Jordan do not wish to see the Arab League organs and institution incapable of accomplishing the least that the Arab person has been wishing for for more than four decades. At the same time, we want the league to be the real Arab household in which our decisions are blessed, and our differences are discussed in an atmosphere of brotherly dialogue that aims for the best in the service of the common pan-Arab interests.

Finally, I thank you for listening, and hope that our meeting will be the prelude to good future meetings during which we would overcome the failure to begin a new stage of construction.

Iraqi, Egyptian 'Private Contacts'

JN1505182891 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1715 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpts] Arab foreign ministers concluded their meetings this afternoon without discussing the issues that were listed on the agenda. They agreed to refer these issues to the next session of the Arab League Council in September. [passage omitted]

It has been learned that private contacts were held on the sidelines of the Arab League meetings this morning and afternoon between the Iraqi delegation, led by the Iraqi minister of state for foreign affairs, and Egyptian officials, including Dr. Butrus Ghali, Egyptian minister of state for foreign affairs; and Dr. 'Usamah al-Baz, political adviser to President Mubarak. The Iraqi delegation also met with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid.

Speaking to our radio, an Iraqi official accompanying the Iraqi delegation to the meetings has not denied what is being said about Iraq's intention to invite Egyptian construction companies to participate in reconstructing Iraq. The Iraqi official, who demanded anonymity, said that Iraq is entering the Arab arena with an open mind, and that it will do its utmost to restore cohesion to Arab ranks. He also considered Iraq's approval of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al- Majid's nomination to the Arab League secretary general post a sign that should be examined.

Kuwait's Al-Salim Addresses Media

NC1505201891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1840 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has reiterated that Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations are good and like the relationship in one family established a long time ago. He pointed out that his meeting with President Mubarak yesterday was good, fruitful, and successful.

At a news conference in Cairo this evening, the Kuwaiti minister denied the presence of tension in Egyptian-Kuwaiti relations, adding that his exchanges with Egyptian ministers were fruitful. He stressed that Egypt's principled stand on the issue of Kuwait's occupation has increased Kuwait's belief in the importance of further strengthening and promoting relations with fraternal Egypt, maintaining that the relations between the two countries are firm and strong.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister called on officials and the media in Egypt and Kuwait not to inflate matters or blow them out of proportion. He stressed that businessmen have a duty to consolidate the bases of relations between the two countries.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister said that the Damascus Declaration is being implemented, noting that the meeting of foreign ministers of the eight states this evening is in line with the fundamental principles of the Damascus Declaration, which cover security and military affairs.

Regarding the employment of foreign labor in Kuwait, the minister said that his country has never reneged on any of its commitments. The world stood on our side because we honor our words, he added.

Asked if Iran will take part in the security arrangements in the area, the Kuwaiti foreign minister said that Iran is a neighboring and Islamic state. There is an ongoing dialogue with Iran based on mutual respect and nonintervention in internal affairs to safeguard the peace and security of the region.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister denied reports on the mistreatment of the Palestinians in Kuwait. He said that when travel restrictions were lifted in Kuwait, only 300 Palestinians out of 200,000 residing in Kuwait applied to leave. He noted that 50 personalities representing the Palestinian community in Kuwait met recently with Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah, heir apparent and prime minister, expressing their appreciation of the measures taken by the Kuwaiti Government following its return to Kuwait.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister said that the Kuwaiti judiciary is the only party authorized to try those who collaborated with the Iraqi occupation during the period of the invasion. He noted that it has not been proved that any Egyptian collaborated with the Iraqi regime during that period.

On the rights of the workers in Kuwait before the Iraqi invasion, the Kuwaiti foreign minister stressed that the Kuwaiti Government guarantees the rights of all workers in Kuwait before 2 August 1990. He noted that despite the current obligations of the Kuwaiti Government, it will pay the salaries of the Kuwaitis as of this May. [sentence as received]

The Kuwaiti foreign minister explained that Egyptian workers have priority in getting work in Kuwait. He praised the efficiency of the Egyptian soldiers during the battle of liberation. He said that these soldiers stood beside their Kuwaiti and Saudi brothers to establish right and justice and safeguard the unity of the Arab nation.

He explained that the current dialogue between the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states and the EC is an Arab-European dialogue in the interest of all the Arab states and not only the Gulf states.

On the international conference, the Kuwaiti foreign minister stressed that Kuwait has agreed with the GCC states to send the GCC secretary general as an observer to this conference.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister stressed that his country has always supported the Palestinian issue and the national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Kuwait is also against the displacement of the Palestinian people.

On Turkey's participation in the security arrangements, the Kuwaiti foreign minister ruled out the possibility of Turkey's joining an Arab agreement within the Arab family. He praised Turkey's role during the Gulf war in upholding the principles of international justice.

The Kuwaiti foreign minister stressed that parliamentary life will return to Kuwait but that this will take some time.

At the end of his news conference, the Kuwaiti foreign minister wished Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, Arab League secretary general, success in his mission to marshal the Arab ranks and affirm faith in the Arab spirit in the interest of the Arabs.

Syria's Al-Shar' Criticizes Israel

NC1505210191 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2010 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' has stated that reports that Syria is obstructing the peace process in the region are without foundation and are tendentious propaganda repeated by Israel, which is rejecting the convening of a peace conference. Israel is also rejecting UN participation in this conference and subsequent sessions of the conference to achieve a real peace in the region.

In a statement to newsmen following the Arab League Council meeting today, the Syrian foreign minister said that Israel is trying to blame the Arab side for the current

deadlock in the peace process. He stressed that the Arab side, especially Syria, is serious in its desire to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The Syrian foreign minister said that no one can consider that the presence of the United Nations in a peace conference to address an issue that is as old as the UN Organization itself obstructs peace or represents an intransigent stand. An intransigent stand is one that wishes a meeting to collapse before it takes place.

The Syrian foreign minister said if the efforts of U.S. Secretary James Baker and Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh fail, Israel will be responsible, not the Arab side.

The Syrian foreign minister reiterated that the UN presence at a peace conference is a guarantee for its success and for reaching a peace agreement. Adhering to everything that ensures the success of the conference—not the opposite—is in the interest of the peace process. He noted that Syria adheres to everything that strengthens and supports the peace process and ensures the success of the peace conference.

'Abd-al-Majid Views Election to Post

NC1505142591 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, was elected unanimously today as secretary general of the Arab League for a renewable term of five years.

Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti deputy prime minister and foreign minister, who is chairing the current session of the Arab League Ministerial Council, announced that the council has unanimously elected Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid to the post of Arab League secretary general. Following that announcement, As'ad al-As'ad, assistant Arab League secretary general, informed Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid, who was sitting in an adjoining room, of the decision, and accompanied him to the podium in the main conference room.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid was sworn in and took his seat to the right of the chairman of the current session, while al-As'ad sat to the left of the chairman. Egypt's delegation was led by Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Following his election, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid made a speech. He said the Arab League is on the threshold of a new phase in its history, following the grinding crisis we all had to go through over the past months. I consider my election to this post as a reflection of a clear and all-embracing Arab resolve to overcome the setbacks of the pan-Arab march and take joint Arab efforts to new horizons that will serve the interests of Arab countries and nations. The election is also a symbol of faith in the role of Egypt and President Husni Mubarak and their responsibilities toward the Arab people. Egypt has always been committed to the Arab League, which it helped found.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that during the last few years the Arab League faced a number of challenges and threats that shook the nation and almost shattered the foundation of joint Arab work and relations between Arab countries. These challenges and threats left their mark on the Arab League and its affiliated organizations and interfered with their performance and effectiveness.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added: What was remarkable, however, was that all Arab countries without exception demonstrated a sincere desire to preserve the Arab League. We all are aware that the Arab League is like a home to all Arabs, regardless of any differences that may surface. The league's charter and other Arab conventions agree that the league provides an institutional expression of the goals and aspirations of the Arab people. The league, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid noted, is the foremost pan-Arab organization, and all of the Arab people's experiences proved that there is no substitute for that organization.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid went on to say: Electing me as the Arab League secretary general is an assignment of responsibility. I am proud. It is a task at which I shall work deligently to deepen Arab solidarity and promote the Arab League's action according to the letter and spirit of the Arab League Charter and the other Arab charters.

He added: I strongly believe that my basic task in the upcoming period is to act according to the directives of our leaderships and in coordination and cooperation with all the brothers, their excellencies the Arab foreign ministers. Our task is to restore confidence in relations within our Arab family and purify the Arab atmosphere. I strongly believe that this is essential for any serious joint Arab action in any field so that we can, with God's help, mend the rift and reunify Arab ranks. Consequently, we can seriously, objectively, and rationally address the changes in international economic and political relations and in the international order in general.

The Arab League secretary general said that the Arab nation possesses enough strength to enable it, without any doubt, to play a tangible role in drafting a new world order, and we must employ all these strengths in the service of our Arab nation's objectives and its people's interests.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid stressed the need to overcome the effects of past differences and to benefit from our experience, and added: We must work to dress the wounds, reunify ranks, and leave the ordeals behind us. We failed to control the events in the past, but let us be united in the future so that we can serve our aspirations and attain our pan-Arab objectives.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid emphasized the importance of supporting the Arab League and guaranteeing its future, as this is the way to achieving the Arab's hopes from the

ocean to the Gulf. He proposed a group of principles that would constitute the necessary requisites for his work as Arab League secretary general. These principles are:

1. The Arab League is the actual and practical embodiment of the Arab states' will and joint Arab objectives. Our will is stronger than any challenges and our objectives are too strong to be shaken by crises, regardless of their effects on the Arab order, mentality, and conscience;

2. The Arab League is the fortress where Arabs assemble to solve their problems and patch up their differences in a spirit of brotherhood and constructive dialogue. The Arab League is the ultimate sanctuary for the Arabs;

3. Differences might occur over interpretations and ideas regarding the way to achieve pan-Arab objectives. These differences, however, should be transient because in the long run the Arab states' interests are but one;

4. Since its establishment the Arab League has accomplished much in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields. These accomplishments were essential to the unity of Arab ranks;

5. The Arab League has effectively contributed to supporting the independence and sovereignty of all the Arab states in the face of the dangers that had threatened them. There are many examples of this in our modern history;

6. The Arab League belongs to all the Arab states;

7. The Arab League must promote its role in accordance with the charter's provisions in crisis management situations affecting the Arab order;

8. In accordance with the spirit of its charter, the Arab League must address the new issues imposed on the Arab and international orders, such as the environment, human rights, and the issues of political and social transformations.

9. The Arab League cannot be disassociated or isolated from the developments we see in the international order, including the changes affecting the international and regional organizations, foremost being the United Nations, the OAU, and the EC;

10. Affiliation with the Arab League dictates rights and commitments to the member states. While performing its task, the Arab League will respect the rights of the member states which, in turn, will shoulder their commitments toward the league because it is their league in the first place;

11. The Arab League is the umbrella under which all Arab regional groupings operate. Therefore, we must develop the ties between the league and these groupings that represent one of the instruments of joint Arab action; and,

12. The Arab League's role can be activated by ammending its charter to reflect the collective desire for development. We must also think of setting up an order to patch up Arab differences, seek to prevent the occurrence of such differences, and interfere when appropriate to end any kind of disputes. We must create a system for regular consultations at relatively short intervals to consolidate joint Arab action.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid then defined a group of problems facing the Arab world. He said these problems require Arab cohesion and solidarity so that we can work out comprehensive solutions to these problems, foremost among which are the Palestinian issue and the Arab-Israeli conflict.

He said that the Palestinian people's problem is the Arabs' principal issue. It is an issue of fate and existence. The Arab world will enjoy stability and security only when a just settlement is worked out based on the UN and Arab resolutions and when it recognizes the right of the Palestinian people to exercise all their firm and national rights. Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added. He said: We must prove to the world as we did before that we are a nation aspiring to live in a just and lasting peace with everyone.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid pointed to the peace initiative the PLO proposed in November 1988 and which the international community accepted. He hoped that the elements of this initiative will be addressed constructively in order to restore the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. He lauded the steadfastness demonstrated by the Arab inhabitants in the occupied territories. He said: Our principal duty toward our Palestinian people who are under the yoke of occupation is to enable them to stand fast against the Israeli aggression and occupation.

Addressing greetings to the Palestinian people in the occupied territories, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid reiterated that the injustice inflicted on them is an injustice done to us all. Therefore, the Arab League will devote a large portion of its efforts to mobilizing the world public in favor of the Palestinian issue and to ensuring the implementation of the indivisible UN resolutions.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid then dealt with the second topic of concern to the Arab world during the next stage: the challenges to pan-Arab security. He said that these challenges are enormous and pressing. But the Arab nation's determination to overcome the present problems and future challenges will, God willing, enable us to draw up the necessary plans for handling such challenges. Let constructive and effective Arab solidarity always be our slogan, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid added.

In conclusion, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said: As I assume my post as the Arab League secretary general, I realize the size of my historic responsibility. With God's help, with our cohesion and solidarity, with the efforts of the brother Arab League assistants general, and with the help of all the Arab work groups, we will be able to confront the challenges.

He added: I pledge to the Arab people that I will use all my strength to carry out my duty as the secretary general of the Arab League. I will take into consideration the supreme national interests of the Arab nation and I will see to it that my constitution and course of action are based on the Arab League Charter and all the resolutions adopted by the Arab summit conferences and the League Council.

Comments on Regional Security Moves

NC1605134491 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1220 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Riyadh, 16 May (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stressed that Egyptian-Saudi relations have been strengthened by their identical views on various Arab and international issues.

In an interview with the Saudi newspaper AL-JAZIRAH, he said that his first tasks as Arab League secretary general are to mend the Arab rift, improve bilateral relations between the Arab countries, consider amending the Arab League Charter to keep up with Arab developments, and restore the league's role as an important international organization.

To a question about the security arrangements within the framework of the Damascus Declaration, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said that the Damascus Declaration is not directed at anyone nor is it a new axis. He said the door is open for any Arab state to join the declaration if it accepts all of the stipulated provisions. He added that the Damascus Declaration concerns the Arab countries only, because the security of the Arab world should be a pure Arab responsibility.

In the interview, Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid said: With regard to the new security order and arrangements in the region, everything about this topic is negotiable between the parties concerned, and we are still at the beginning.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid affirmed that the Palestinian issue is the core of the conflict in the Middle East, and in the absence of its solution there can be no peace with Israel. He said that Egypt is eager to reach an honorable solution that would guarantee the legitimate social and political rights of the Palestinian people. He maintained that Egypt supports the convening of an international peace conference or a regional conference with European, U.S., and Soviet participation and under UN auspices.

Egyptian, Syrian, GCC Foreign Ministers Meet

NC1505175791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1720 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Cairo, 15 May (MENA)—The foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria, and the six Gulf Cooperation Council states held a meeting this evening in Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar's suite in the Semiramis Hotel in Cairo to discuss cooperation among them and adopt the necessary steps to implement the Damascus Declaration.

The Egyptian delegation was headed by Dr. Butrus Ghali, minister of state for foreign affairs.

Following the meeting of the eight foreign ministers, Assistant Foreign Minister Ambassador Mahmud Abu-al-Nasr said that the ministers held consultations on the Damascus Declaration. They also discussed ways to adopt steps that are necessary for drawing up information, economic, and political protocols that would insure the implementation of the declaration.

Ambassador Abu-al-Nasr said that an agreement was reached to hold meetings involving experts from Egypt, Syria, and the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states in Riyadh in early June. The experts will discuss the various concepts submitted by each state concerning the protocols. He added that the ministers also agreed to meet again in Kuwait in early July to discuss the concepts and arrive at a final formula.

Ambassador Abu-al-Nasr went on to say that the ministers further discussed the efforts being made by the United States, the Soviet Union, and the European states to establish a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and resolve the Palestinian issue.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Delegation Meets Baker in Jerusalem

LD1505181191 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The Palestinian delegation led by brother Faysal al-Husayni, which includes Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi and Dr. Zakariya al-Agha, yesterday in occupied Jerusalem met U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. The meeting lasted two and a half hours. Following the meeting brother Faysal al-Husayni told reporters that the meeting had been frank and added: Now we have a better understanding of the U.S. attitude and hope to reach the means which consecrate the Palestinians' deep desire for the progress of the peace process. It is worth mentioning that this meeting replaced the meeting scheduled for Baker's third round which he had to cut short due to the death of his mother.

In his turn, James Baker confirmed yesterday that he got the agreement of be sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union which leads to direct negotiations with the aim of achieving comprehensive peace on the basis of Resolutions 242 and 338.

Al-Husayni Comments on Meeting

JN1505191491 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1747 GMT 15 May 91

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, director of the Palestinian Studies Center in Jerusalem by correspondents Yusuf Dakkash and Nabil Haydar; place, date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Dakkash] Faysal al-Husayni, you were one of the members of the delegation that met James Baker yesterday. The meeting lasted two and a half hours. Are you more optimistic or more pessimistic after your recent meeting with the U.S. secretary of state?

[Al-Husayni] The truth is that after the meeting—a meeting that I consider a serious and frank meeting in which there was some kind of confrontation—I cannot say that I am more or less optimistic. I can only say that the Americans now understand our position better, and we understand their position better.

[Dakkash] Yes, what do you mean by this? Do the Americans have a specific position, or are they trying to bring viewpoints closer?

[Al-Husayni] This is the issue in question. Had they had a specific position, we would have learned it at the first meeting. But in view of the fact that as yet they do not have a definitive position, we were obliged to seek out their position through protracted, difficult discussions.

[Dakkash] Mr. Faysal, in a few words, can the regional conference, the peace conference, or whatever name is given to it be held within months?

[Al-Husayni] I believe this basically depends on the Israeli stand on some points. If the Israeli authorities respond to some of these points, I believe the conference will then begin in a few weeks time. But if Israel does not respond to these points, I believe that a very big question mark will arise with respect to the entire issue of the conference.

[Dakkash] My colleague Nabil Haydar is with me, and he would like to pose some questions.

[Al-Husayni] Please do.

[Haydar] Have you obtained explicit replies to the questions you submitted to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker?

[Al-Husayni] We obtained replies, and we submitted new questions concerning specific proposals that we wish the Americans to respond to. We communicated to the Palestinian leadership what they told us. We will wait for replies to the new questions and to the new demands so that we may communicate them at the time to the Palestinian leadership.

[Haydar] Can one say that it is still premature to disclose part of the discussions between you and the U.S. secretary of state, as you are waiting to see how the Israeli stand will develop in light of results of Baker's talks today and tomorrow with Shamir, Arens, and David Levi?

[Al-Husayni] Yes, I believe it is better not to make public the nature of the demands, the discussion, and the talks that were held with Baker until we get a clearer picture of the Israeli stand.

[Haydar] With regard to the issue of the Palestinian representation, I believe that it is also too early to speak about a joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation.

[Al-Husayni] Yes, because the Palestinian position is as follows: Either there will be very clear and positive content on where it [the conference] leads us—and then the issue of representation will not be a top priority and an understanding on this issue and on the form of the representation will be reached—or the content will be shallow and unclear, in which case the representation should be strong and clear.

[Haydar] With the continued Israeli adherence to the policy of settlements, what will be the reaction of Palestinians inside the occupied territory?

[Al-Husayni] The Palestinian reaction will be through our position on the overall process conducted by the United States. We say to the Americans that your credibility is facing a test. You either adopt clear and principled positions to express your declared positions, and then you will have credibility among the Palestinians and the peace process could be given momentum; or you will have a shallow position through which you go back on your declared positions, and then the only option for Palestinians will be to adopt struggle on the ground and ignore the achievements that could be attained through political talks at this stage.

[Dakkash] My question, Faysal, is about the Syrian position as they have been expressed.

[Al-Husayni] The Syrian position was conveyed to us through the news agencies and then through Mr. Baker himself. We believe that the Syrian position is a legitimate demand; it calls for UN supervision, because we want a sound legal reference to lead this conference and to arbitrate any differences among the different delegations at the conference. As I have said, there must be a clear position and legal reference, and this is what we call the content. Otherwise, we must have a strong representation to be in harmony with this content. We believe that the Syrian position has not changed greatly regarding the first part of the issue, the issue of the content.

Fatah Backs 'Arafat Acceptance of Baker Proposal

LD1605020591 Algiers Domestic Service in Arabic 2200 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] At a time when the Zionist hard line continues, Yasir 'Arafat, PLO Executive Committee chairman, has won the support of Fatah, the main group in the PLO, for his acceptance of the idea of peace and the efforts of the U.S. secretary of state. In a statement following the meeting of the Revolutionary Council in Tunis, Fatah has confirmed its commitment to the peace initiative it issued in Algiers in 1988 and to making a positive and effective contribution to the political efforts for peace.

'Arafat: Talks With Bessmertnykh 'Very Positive'

LD1505181291 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The brother president leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of Palestine and PLO Executive Committee chairman, has described his talks last night with Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh in Geneva as very positive. He said at the end of a two-hour meeting held at the headquarters of the Soviet mission to the United Nations in Geneva that the meeting will allow us to coordinate our efforts by all means for the sake of giving an impetus to the peace process in the region.

On the other hand, in an interview with THE INDEPENDENT, a British newspaper, the brother president leader Abu-'Ammar called for the implementation of UN resolutions on the occupied territories in Palestine. He asked whether the Americans will be sending their forces to implement UN resolutions on Palestine and said: Will America send its forces to Palestine as it did to northern Iraq, because the Palestinians are the ones who are really confronting oppression in the Gaza Strip and they indeed need international protection?

The brother president warned that there will be no real peace and stability in the region if anyone tries to ignore Palestinian rights, because the Palestinians only want the realization of the legitimacy established by the United Nations. The brother president leader Abu-'Ammar also stressed the role which Europe must play in any peace process.

Fatah Issues Statement on Mideast Peace Efforts

Urges Five-Party Arab Meeting

NC1505183891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1815 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Tunis, 15 May (MENA)—The Fatah movement, the mainstream Palestinian organization, has called for a five-party meeting comprising Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and the PLO to coordinate stands on current developments in the Middle East.

In a statement issued this evening following a five-day meeting of its Revolutionary Council, Fatah declared its rejection of any peace conference not held on the basis of Arab and international legitimacy resolutions and under UN auspices.

Fatah stressed its positive and effective contribution to the ongoing efforts to achieve a settlement in the Middle East. It also stressed its adherence to the firm Palestinian principles, especially the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and the 1988 Palestinian peace initiative.

In its statement distributed by the Palestinian news agency WAFA, the Fatah Revolutionary Council called for opening a new page in the fraternal relations between the PLO and Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf states.

On the intifadah in the occupied territories, the statement said that the Fatah Revolutionary Council has adopted a comprehensive program to support the steadfastness of the Palestinian people against the Israeli policy of repression and starvation and the financial and economic blockade imposed on them. The statement called for widening the base of the intifadah and entrenching Palestinian unity.

The statement declared the Fatah movement's determination to resist the Israeli colonization policy by all ways and means.

The statement called on UN Secretary General Perez de Cuellar to adopt the necessary measures to stop the colonization process and the judaization of Jerusalem.

The statement called for intensified efforts to bring about the withdrawal of the U.S. and Western forces from Iraq. It expressed the hope that normal relations will be restored between Kuwait and the Palestinian community in order to achieve Arab reconciliation.

The statement expressed appreciation of the stands of the Soviet Union, China, and France in support of the Palestinian people and the PLO.

Further on Statement

JN1605072191 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 16 May 91 p 15

[Text] Tunis, (WAFA) [no date as published]—On the conclusion of its meetings in Tunis, the Palestinian Fatah Movement's Revolutionary Council has declared a series of political decisions concerning the current issues in the Arab and Palestinian arenas.

In a statement issued yesterday, the Revolutionary Council hailed the march of Jordanian-Palestinian brotherly ties and reaffirmed the distinguished and special relations between the Jordanian and Palestinian peoples. The statement also stressed the need to strengthen those ties and to coordinate efforts between the Jordanian Government and the PLO in all fields.

The statement said that a comprehensive program to support the Palestinian people's steadfastness and blessed intifadah has been adopted and emphasized support for our masses' steadfastness in the face of the war of starvation and the financial blockade imposed on them. The statement also emphasized the importance of the leading role played by the Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah and all nationalistic and mass organizations and institutions to activate and escalate the intifadah—a matter which requires improving the role of the mass organizations and their contributions to the intifadah activities.

Fatah's Revolutionary Council stressed adherence to the Palestinian principles, particularly the Palestinian people's right to repatriation, self-determination, and the establishment of their free and independent state with holy Jerusalem as its capital. The council also stressed

adherence to the Palestinian peace plan approved by the Palestine National Council in 1988 in Algiers and the proclamation of the independent state of Palestine in accordance with the Arab and international legitimacy. The council also declared its rejection of any peace conference that is not convened based on the resolutions of the Arab and international legitimacy and with the participation of the UN Security Council's five permanent members and all sides to the conflict, including the PLO on equal footing with the other parties.

The statement underlined Palestinian national unity and the need to strengthen it. The statement also stressed the rejection of self-rule and phony alternative plans and the insistence to continue the struggle to regain the usurped rights. Fatah's Revolutionary Council also rejected all imperialist and Zionist schemes that aim at encroaching upon the legitimate leadership, bypassing the national inalienable rights, or ignoring the case of holy Jerusalem.

The council also rejected the Zionist settlement policy and declared its determination to resist it by all means. It also urged the Arab and Islamic countries, as well as the Jerusalem Committee, to shoulder their responsibility to confront the conspiracy against Jerusalem and Islamic and Christian sacred places. The council also urged the Soviet Union to halt the emigration of Soviet Jews to occupied Palestine and demanded the United States immediately stop all aid to the Israeli Government that helps settle Jewish immigrants and build illegitimate settlements.

Fatah's Revolutionary Council also called for turning a new leaf in brotherly ties between the PLO, Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf Cooperation Council member states, as well as between Iraq and the Gulf states and all concerned countries to create the appropriate ground for opening a new chapter of brotherhood and solidarity.

The council also welcomed the result of the contacts with Lebanon and called for international efforts to protect the Palestinian people under occupation.

Kuwait

Foreign Minister's Cairo News Conference Reported

LD1505224991 London KUNA in Arabic 1953 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpts] Cairo, 15 May (KUNA)—Shaykh Salim Sabah al-Salim al-Sabah, deputy prime minister and foreign minister, has compared Kuwaiti-Egyptian relations to family relations, to those of a brothers. They are ruled by firm principles and a faith that stems from the will of the two peoples and their leaders, he said.

At a news conference he held this evening after chairing the 95th session of the Arab League ministerial council, he said: Kuwait firmly believes in this eternal relationship, which began with the arrival in Kuwait of the first Egyptian teaching mission to contribute to the education of the sons of Kuwait, and went on to reach an advanced stage of closeness and cohesion under the leadership of President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, his brother Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, and Shaykh Sa'd al- 'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent.

He added: The choice of Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid as secretary general of the Arab League indicates sisterly Egypt's position in the hearts of all Arabs. It is a successful choice in view of Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid's experience and knowledge.

In reply to a question on the security arrangements announced at the meeting of the six Gulf countries, Egypt, and Syria, he said: There will be meetings in Cairo and Kuwait to complete discussions on that subject from the political and military angles. This confirms the great closeness among these eight countries. [passage omitted]

In reply to a question on Iran's role in security arrangements, Shaykh Salim stated: Iran is a neighboring Muslim country. There is dialogue with it, based on mutual respect, to ensure the region's security and stability with emphasis on noninterference in the internal affairs of any country in the region.

He urged the media to investigate the situation in Kuwait. He said: There is a group which cooperated with Saddam Husayn's regime, and it will be referred to the competent courts in Kuwait. Kuwaiti justice, which is renowned for its integrity and independence, will be left to speak the truth. He declared: In this connection, some foreign media have focused on specific Arab nationalities for purposes and objectives that are known to everyone. [passage omitted]

Interior Minister on Elections, Other Issues

LD1605021591 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Television Network in Arabic 2225 GMT 15 May 91

[From the "Kuwait Message" program]

[Excerpts] In a press statement published today, Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad Hamud al-Jabir al-Sabah stressed that his ministry is ready to organize and record lists of the Kuwaiti electorate in preparation for the return of parliamentary life to Kuwait.

In a statement to the Voice of Kuwait's international service, he said: On our part, we are making all the preparations for the return of the National Assembly, citing the amir of Kuwait's pledge in his speech during Ramadan, in which his highness stressed that parliamentary elections would be held next year. On his part, the interior minister said that the Interior Ministry would not be lenient with anyone who might be tempted to violate laws, and that a decree would be issued within the next two weeks on the appointment of four governors. [passage omitted]

He said that current passports would definitely be changed, and that the process might take two months or longer.

On the other hand, Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad Hamud revealed that the competent authorities had completed their interrogation of the members of the so-called provisional Kuwaiti Government, which was set up under pressure from the ruler of Baghdad, Saddam. The Interior Ministry has referred the case to the court to pronounce its final judgement; it is the body that will decide whether they are innocent or guilty. He said that the head of that government, Ala' Husayn, was still in Iraq.

The interior minister said that Saddam gave them salaries and watches, which they handed over to the Kuwaiti Government on their arrival in the country.

Shaykh Ahmad Hamud denied that there had been any differences between steadfast Kuwaiti citizens and those who had left the country. In a statement to international, Arab, and local media, he stressed that Kuwait was one cohesive cooperating family.

In reply to a question, the interior minister said: We have no evidence on whether the provisional government members are guilty. However, they accepted ministerial appointments, had meetings with Iraqi ministers, and appeared on Iraqi television. He said: We have remanded them to justice. Shaykh Ahmad Hamud said that the court would decide whether those who cooperated with the occupation authorities deserved to be executed, and whether the trials would be held in public or behind closed doors. He stressed that Kuwait is a democratic country, and the accused had the right to appoint lawyers to defend them.

Regarding the non-Kuwaiti category problem, the interior minister said: There is bound to be a solution to that. He said that there were committees to study the changing of second class citizenship to first class citizenship, and that the result of the study would be decided in the near future. The interior minister added that residents who left the country during the occupation could return to Kuwait six months from now.

Prime Minister Makes Statement to AL-SIYASAH

LD1505133591 London KUNA in Arabic 0842 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Jeddah, 15 May (KUNA)—His Highness the Crown Prince, Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah says in a statement published here today that his country will not forgive the Arab governments that dealt with Iraq during the invasion, and he expresses his belief that the rest of the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] member states have the same feelings as Kuwait.

In a statement to the Kuwaiti paper AL-SIYASAH, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd described the position of those countries that did business with Iraq as "shameful and painful," in addition to being "disgraceful and bad." He said: "The pro-Iraq countries helped Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and more still: they supported and justified the invasion, and described themselves as its defenders."

He continued: "We will not forget their positions, and our brothers in the GCC member states will not forget this." He stressed the importance of linking together the peoples of the Gulf region, "all of them and unreservedly," and he said: "We want cooperation to include all concepts, whether economic, political, social, or related to security."

He stressed that "the earthquake that hit Kuwait has only one meaning, which is that the GCC member states should become one force." He added: "The crisis in Kuwait has left us with new concepts of cooperation between the states of the region." His highness pointed out that this cooperation will appear in the Gulf summit meeting, which, he affirmed, will be held in Kuwait next December at the invitation of his highness the amir, and that preparations for this are underway.

He described the coming meeting between Gulf leaderships as "important, as we will be looking at a new concept of cooperation, which may arrive at interesting possibilities. He did not give further details, but he stressed that Kuwait was with any course of cooperation between the six council members.

His Highness Shaykh Sa'd praised the position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia toward Kuwait during the occupation, and he said that the position of its leadership, with at its head the custodian of the two holy mosques, King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, stemmed from "deep-rooted Arab loyalty." He further said the decision on war was not easy for Saudi Arabia, but "the Iraqi danger had its extensions, and it was not confined to Kuwait. Iraq was dreaming of messing around in all the GCC member states, if the world allowed it to do so."

His highness the crown prince and prime minister spoke about the priorities of the program of the new Kuwaiti Government, saying that tackling the burning oil wells is the foremost priority, now that Kuwait has been able to restore electricity, water, and telephone services to their previous state, despite the fact that destruction was cruel.

He added that putting out oil well fires in order to preserve Kuwait's wealth, environment, and the health of its sons, is "our main preoccupation," and he expressed his belief that "considerable progress" has been realized in this task. He underlined that "more than 100 oil well fires have been extinguished and brought under control, and during this week the number of fire fighting teams will increase. There will be various nationalities, such as Chinese, Russians, Iranians, and Canadians moving in, and previous teams will be asked to increase their numbers."

His highness expressed his belief that "in a short time we will have gone a long way toward the preservation of the oil wealth, and seriously clearing the environment, in addition to making preparations for production to meet local needs and perhaps more than that." He described matters as "going in accordance with an excellent and outstanding program."

As for the security situation in Kuwait, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd said that the security situation "is a great deal better than it was at the beginning of the liberation," and he mentioned "some very minor thefts, that have been dealt with." He further said that "the human and technical security apparatus is being completed." He pointed ot that "in a few days, there will be full control."

His Highness Shaykh Sa'd denied reports of torture undertaken by some Kuwaiti groups against non-Kuwaiti residents, and he said: "There is no truth in the way this is portrayed." He urged all the international humanitarian bodies ascertain the truth of these allegations, and he said: "we are open" to them. He affirmed: "We will not repeat the mistake of others," but he mentioned that "one or two cases" took place "before the arrival of the official government apparatus." He described such cases as "small and insignificant, and they have been put before the international bodies."

Concerning local criticism of government policy, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd said: "Criticism is easy. If there is anyone who wants to beat drums over negative things, then anyone, irrespective of how eager he may be to excel, must be open to error." In response to criticism that the government should have prepared for the post-liberation period, when it was outside Kuwait, His Highness said: "The Kuwaiti Government came in and was handed over destroyed installations, and these installations, especially electricity, water, and necessities, have been restored in record time."

He further said: "What we have achieved so far is regarded as a source of pride about which equitable men will speak in the future," and he affirmed that "there is an extensive action program before the government, an honorable program of action, and I am proud to be one of its instruments." He expressed regret at the distribution of leaflets after the liberation of Kuwait, and he said: "Some wanted to strike while the iron was hot, and the aim was a continuing climate of political tension for

known objectives: strike while the iron of the new government is hot so that it could be shaped as they like."

"But this does not disturb us because the only one not to make mistakes is he who does not work, and it will not affect us, because the iron of the government is shaped as people like, not as those who wanted to strike at it like."

Saudi Arabia

Closer Ties With Tehran Said Being Cultivated

JN1305204191 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 13 May 91

[Muhammad Sadiq al-Husayni dispatch from Tehran]

[Text] An informed source in Tehran told our radio that Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal will arrive in Tehran during the last week of May to follow up the talks that started between the two countries during 'Ali Akbar Velayati's visit to Jeddah two weeks ago. Sa'ud al-Faysal's visit comes amid uncertainty about the future of the proposed security arrangements in the Gulf. After the breakup [infirat] of the Damascus declaration, which placed Egypt and Syria at the heart of the Gulf security formula, it would appear that Riyadh is seeking the help of Tehran as a potential partner to the security structure of the Gulf Cooperation Council states in order to create a balance with the U.S. plan for Gulf security, which prevents any force other than the United States from taking part in the security formula.

Saudi Arabia, which has recently appeared careful to woo Iran on more than one level, is again keen on cooperating with Tehran to discuss the future of Iraq and receive delegations from the Iraqi Islamic opposition in Riyadh to discuss this issue.

Sources of the Islamic opposition based in Tehran stressed to us that 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Hakim has returned from a positive, cordial recent visit to Saudi Arabia. It would seem that the two sides agreed to continue consultations. An important meeting between al- Hakim's brother, Muhammad Baqir al-Hakim, leader of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq, and Prince Saud al- Faysal is expected to be held during the latter's visit to Tehran. The same sources say that al-Faysal will invite al-Hakim to visit Riyadh and meet with King Fahd.

Al-Hakim's political assistant, Shaykh Abu-Ibrahim, who attended the Riyadh meeting with Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal, told our radio that a five-point agreement on the future of Iraq was reached with the Saudi Government. It can be summed up as follows:

1. Iraqi President Saddam Husayn should be overthrown.

2. The territorial integrity of Iraq should not be sold out.

3. The future government in Iraq should reflect ethnic and sectarian pluralism.

4. No current political action by any Iraqi opposition force should be vetoed.

5. Iraqi opposition should have a parliament reflecting all its trends and inclinations.

Meanwhile, and in light of successive reports that a comprehensive agreement between the Kurdish opposition movement and the Iraqi regime in Baghdad is about to be reached, an Islamic opposition source here says that efforts by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, representative of the UN secretary general, to find safehavens for Shiite refugees in southern Iraq are widely accepted by Tehran and the Iraqi opposition. These efforts also enjoy the support of France, Germany, and Saudi Arabia. The latter, according to a senior official close to Mr. al-Hakim, is a big country with which we must establish distinguished relations, such as those with Iran, the other big neighbor which must be considered by any future government in Iraq.

Saddam Chairs Armed Forces Command Meeting

JN1605074391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0727 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 May (INA)—Staff Field Marshal President Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, chaired a meeting of the Armed Forces General Command last night.

General 'Izzat Ibrahim, vice chairman of the Revolution Command Council and deputy commander in chief of the Armed Forces; Interior Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid; and Defense Minister Lieutenant General Husayn Kamil Hasan attended.

Amman Committee Denounces 'Unjust' UN Resolution

JN1405203391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1825 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Amman, 14 May (INA)—The Jordanian Amman Declaration Committee for Achieving Militant Unity With Iraq and Palestine has affirmed that the U.S.-Atlantic aggression against Iraq did not end with the cease-fire; it is a continuous aggression which is becoming fiercer to destroy the military and economic power and cultural and scientific achievements of Iraq and the Arab nation. In a declaration issued in Amman, the committee noted that the imperialist forces have devoted all their agents in the Arab and regional arena to continuing their aggression against Iraq, and have turned the Security Council into a plaything to issue a series of unjust resolutions, including Resolution No. 687, in an attempt to impose the new world order of force.

The committee said that the recent Security Council resolution, with its unjust conditions, is an expression of the imperialist and Zionist intentions to deprive Arabs of the basic components of self- defense and to entrench the force of their Zionist enemy to impose its settlement programs and hostile schemes.

The declaration notes that the new aggression and the Zionist-imperialist onslaught cannot be confronted on a countrywide or regional scale, because this force plans to impose hegemony and tyranny over the entire Arab nation.

The Amman Declaration Committee called for uniting the struggle of the Iraqi, Palestinian, and Jordanian people to confront the imminent danger and to deprive the imperialists and their collaborators of the opportunity to carry out their schemes.

The Amman declaration notes that the heavy damages of the bestial aggression against Iraq are not inflicted on the people of Iraq alone, and the destructive effects of the Zionist expansion are not borne by the Arab people of Palestine alone, but that the damage and destruction affects the entire Arab nation.

The committee called on the good masses in the Arab homeland to reject the unjust resolutions of the Security Council against Iraq, underscore their illegitimacy, and refuse to abide by these resolutions.

The declaration denounces the imperialist interference in Iraq's internal affairs and all suspect attempts to internationalize the fabricated and planned internal problems.

The declaration calls for adopting scientific methods to support the brave Palestinian intifadah and the PLO, to terminate the so- called greater Israel plan, and to reject the suspect plans to liquidate the Palestine question.

The declaration also calls for toppling the Damascus declaration and attempts to encroach on the PLO or marginalize its role, and for exposing the so-called security arrangements and the new world order.

The declaration stresses the need to confront the inhuman practices carried out by the Kuwaiti authorities with the participation of the imperialist forces, as well as to stop the massacres perpetrated against Arab citizens in Kuwait.

Information Minister Hammadi Interviewed

TA1505150391 Ankara ANATOLIA in Turkish 1355 GMT 15 May 91

[Report on interview of Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, Iraqi minister of information and culture, by M. Hulki Cevizoglu]

[Text] Baghdad (AA)—Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, who was recently appointed Iraqi minister of culture and information, said: Had we wanted to, we could have hit Turkey during the war.

The Iraqi Administration, which has maintained its postwar silence, has made important announcements to the world on various issues through Hammadi.

While there are numerous foreign correspondents who have been waiting in Baghdad for days to be granted an interview, Hammadi immediately agreed to meet the Anatolia Agency [AA] correspondent and replied to his questions.

Hammadi, who talked for almost two hours with the AA correspondent, summed up the postwar negotiations being held with the Kurdish leaders Talabani and Barzani in the following way: Those who fought against us in the past are now embracing our head of state. This is human nature.

Noting that Iraq has always expressed its friendship toward Turkey and that three years ago it even allowed the Turkish Armed Forces to penetrate some 40 km into Iraqi territory, Hammadi said the following regarding the Gulf war: We have, at times, been stabbed in the back.

Referring to the Kurdish question, Hammadi said that for years the United States has been inciting the Kurds against the Iraqi Administration and added:

We have been aware of the Kurdish problem since the sixties. When the Ba'th Party came to power in Iraq, we held talks with the representatives of our Kurdish citizens. We signed an agreement in March 1970. At that time, the United States again interfered in our domestic affairs. Iran supported the Kurds during the Shah's regime. It incited Mustafa Barzani. They did not want him to sign an agreement on autonomy. We were forced to fight against the separatists until 1975.

Hammadi said that "the Kurdish problem will continue to exist as long as it is not viewed as a domestic Iraqi problem" and that the intervention of foreign forces will adversely affect the situation.

Noting that the Iraqi Administration wishes to solve the Kurdish problem, Hammadi said: Our Kurdish brethren are aware of this. Some, such as Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani, have at times erred and waged a struggle against Iraq. Now, however, they are coming to Baghdad to embrace the Iraqi head of state. This is human nature. This is the way of human beings.

Noting that the Americans and Western Europeans are, for the first time in history, [word indistinct] toward the Kurds, Hammadi said that Western press establishments and the public have now turned their attention to Iraq, ignoring the problems elsewhere in the world.

Hammadi continued:

All press establishments and the public have now turned their attention to the Kurds, as though there is no other problem in the world. They report on the Kurds 24 hours a day. We are not against our Kurdish brethren. [sentence indistinct] There are many incidents and problems in the world. Why talk only about the Kurdish problem and Kurdish rights? What happened to the rights of the Palestinians? These are all ugly campaigns directed against Iraq and Saddam Husayn.

Describing allegations made against the Iraqi Administration as "a smear campaign," Hammadi said the following:

They claim that Saddam Husayn has some $30 billion in Swiss banks. There are those who claim that he has $80 billion. We do not have that kind of money. They also claim that there is $4 billion in cash stashed away in the presidential palace. Maybe that is the reason why they bombed the palace. This claim is ridiculous. I challenge them. If anyone discloses that Saddam Husayn has a secret, or any other, account in any world bank, we are ready to give away 99 percent of this amount. This is all part of a smear campaign. They are well aware of it.

Hammadi added that Iraq's stand toward Turkey during the war was constructive, but that Iraq was hurt by Turkey's stand. Charging that Turkey stabbed Iraq in the back, the minister continued:

"It was a known fact that the aircraft stationed at Incirlik and other bases were bombing us. No one can deny that. Is that a gesture becoming a friendly neighboring country? How would you feel if we had allowed Soviet aircraft to use Mosul to bomb Ankara? Our feelings, however, are not against the Turkish people. We are aware of how friendly the Turkish people are. I am an Arab, not a Turk. Nevertheless, we know and we feel that Turkey is nearer to us than any other country. That is not the result of religious chauvinism.

"We had the necessary missiles. We could have hit Incirlik or the other U.S. bases in Turkey. We were satisfied with complaining in brotherly and diplomatic ways. The United States and Britain were interested in involving Turkey in the war. President Saddam Husayn's statement that we can hit Turkey was a banner headline in your press organs. The truth is that our president never said such a thing. That was also a part of the same ugly campaign undertaken against Iraq."

Pointing out that the Kurdish issue is also important for Turkey, as it concerns Turkey's security, Hammadi said:

"All the Kurds have left their towns in northern Iraq. The Iraqi troops never opened fire in Dahuk. There was a clash of six to eight hours in Karkuk. There were no clashes in Sulaymaniyah, Irbil, or Dahuk. When the Iraqi army entered Dahuk, it found that 70 percent of the town had been evacuated. The United States intentionally encouraged the exodus of the civilians to the border, thus creating a humanitarian problem. Its aim was to draw the West's attention through the TV cameras. If the problem is that of a relief operation, we are ready to settle the issue with Turkey, our neighbor. We are in contact with the Turkish Red Crescent and Foreign Ministry on that issue. If the main problem is that of transportation and security, we can handle it through our Mosul and your Diyarbakir airports.

"It is claimed that the Kurds are afraid of the Iraqi Army. The Kurds are not afraid of the Iraqi Army, but of interference in their affairs. They themselves created that problem, not Iraq. The problem is now being solved, and tens of thousands of Kurds are returning to their towns and villages.

"Turkey can play a key role. Turkey must contribute to our stability in order to solve the Kurdish problem. Should Iraq become a unstable country, that can harm Turkey as well. We are ready to cooperate with Turkey. You will recall that three years ago we allowed the Turkish troops to cross 40 km into Iraqi territory. What other country would have done so? Would you allow foreign troops to enter 40 km into your territory? Iraq has always cooperated with Turkey. It has always proved its goodwill and neighborliness. But we were sometimes stabbed in the back."

Kurdish Democratic Party leader Mas'ud Barzani, who held talks with President Saddam Husayn for a while, resided with his delegation in the Rashid Hotel, one of the most luxurious hotels in Baghdad.

In a statement to the ANATOLIA correspondent, Barzani said that talks on autonomy will continue in Baghdad for a while.

The ANATOLIA correspondent, who arrived in Baghdad after crossing through numerous check points without being accompanied by the customary official Iraqi guide, witnessed how rockets and missiles left over from the war were being assembled along the roads. Iraqi troops manning the security check points examined the correspondent's passport and cameras but did not interfere in any other way.

Airline Returns Planes to Kuwait, Promises More

JN1205174691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1730 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 12 May (INA)—Iraqi Airways has handed over to the Kuwaiti authorities a serviceable Boeing 727 aircraft in good flying condition.

Nur al-Din Safi, director general of Iraqi Airways, announced this and added that the plane was delivered last week in cooperation with the United Nations and Royal Jordanian Airlines.

He added that the company also will deliver six other Airbus aircraft, currently located in Iran, to the Kuwaiti authorities after they are returned to Iraq.

Hydroelectric, Other Power Stations Resume Work

JN1105085991 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0726 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—It has been announced at the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization that the second unit of Dokan Dam hydroelectric station is operating, capable of generating 160 megawatts.

An official ministry source told INA that the station will operate according to the water flow released from the dam. This will enhance the supply of electricity to the public, especially in the northern area.

The source added that a 1-megawatt hydroelectric unit at al-Hindiyah Dam also is operational and will be used to feed some local loads in the area.

Moreover, the source pointed out that the secondary al-Yarmuk electrical transformer station close to al-Karkh is operating with one transformer. Several of its substations also are operating.

A technical team has rendered the fifth unit of Bayji thermal power station capable of generating electricity. The station's average production, therefore, has increased to 1,000 megawatts to insure that public electricity needs in the Governorates of Baghdad, al-Anbar, Ninawa, and Salah al-Din are met.

'Daily' Bus Service to Amman Begins 15 May

JN1105130691 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1210 GMT 11 May 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 11 May (INA)—The General Establishment for Transportation [GET] will begin daily bus service next Wednesday [15 May] to Amman.

A responsible source at the GET told INA that it first decided to send one daily bus at 1000. He added that talla arrangements have been made to increase the number of passenger bus trips between Amman and Baghdad. [passage omitted]

Tehran Reports 'Sporadic' Clashes in South

LD1405103291 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] The Iraqi popular forces—attacking arms and ammunition depots in the Qasr region, in the south of that country—have clashed with the Ba'thist forces. The Central News Unit, quoting Abu Dhabi Radio, reports: Sources of the Iraqi opposition forces announced that in the course of this clash a number of Ba'thist troops were either killed or captured by the opposition forces.

The Central News Unit report also indicates that sounds of sporadic firing between the Iraqi troops and the opposition forces were heard along the Shalamcheh border all through last night. According to this report, sporadic clashes have continued for the past week.

Refugees Report Destruction

LD1605152891 Tehran IRNA in English 1442 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Ilam, May 16, IRNA—Government troops have mounted heavy attacks on the southern Iraqi cities of Al-'Amarah, 'Ali al- Gharbi, 'Ali al-Sharqi and al-Nasseriya, using tanks, helicopter gunships and airplanes over the past two days, said fresh groups of Iraqi Arabs who sought refuge in Iran today.

They spoke of blood, torture and destruction, and bitterly complained about the "continued unabated massacres in southern Iraq, which the world has deliberately chosen to ignore."

Abdel-Amir Abdel-Razzaq, a school teacher from al-Hillah who crossed into Iran with other Iraqis today, disclosed that "the Republican Guards are bulldozing whole localities in most southern Iraqi cities because the people are fed up with the Ba'thist regime."

He broke down, crying: "Do the advocates of human rights care about the frightening catastrophe in southern Iraq, where our people are groaning under oppression with no television cameras to focus on their plight?"

Southern Iraq was the scene of some pitched battles between pro and anti government forces last March.

when Ba'thist forces used heavy weaponry to flush out the lightly armed popular forces.

According to reliable reports whole townships were slaughtered by vengeful Republican Guards, who also sacked the holy cities of al- Najaf and Karbala', desecrating the venerated shrines of the prophet's (PBUH) [peace be upon him]cousin and son-in-law, Imam Ali (PBUH), and that of the latter's two sons, Imam Husayn (PBUH) and Abul Fazl al-Abbas (PBUH).

"In al-Hillah and down south in al-Samawah," said refugee Mohsen, "more than 1,000 houses have been levelled to the ground by the ba'thist troops, and the residents have been forced to flee to the palm groves and the vast marshlands."

He said during Saddam Husayn's recent visit to al-Hilleh, Ba'th party officials forced the townspeople "with threats and bribes" to welcome him, and assaulted those who refused to do so, as a result of which several were injured and a 13-year-old boy was shot to death.

Mohi Abbas Kadhem [name as received], also from al-Hillah, said despite all sorts of pressures, the people are defiant against Ba'thist rule, a fact which has forced the Republican Guards to move in groups for fear of attacks from the public.

"Hit and run attacks, especially during night, are something not uncommon, and have demoralised the government troops," he added.

Kadhem also said that in al-Hillah, hundreds of women and children have been jailed over the past month, as a result of which "scores of babies have died in front of the eyes of their poor mothers due to mistreatment and malnourishment."

The haggard appearance of Kadhem and his companions indicated the ignored turmoil going on in southern Iraq.

Al-Hillah, about 125 kms south of Baghdad near the ruins of ancient Babylon, is a city which has produced noted scholars, and which, along with other holy cities in Iraq, was spared from destruction by the non-Muslim Mongols during Hulagu Khan's sack of Baghdad in 1258.

U.S. Presence Blamed for Refugee Problem

JN1605083291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0625 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 May (INA)—Iraqi papers published today say the insistence by Washington and its allies on keeping their military presence in northern Iraq—under the pretext of protecting Kurdish refugees—reveals their conspiratorial intentions, particularly hegemonistic and colonial ones.

An AL-JUMHURIYAH editorial says U.S., British, and French use of the so-called refugee relief or protection to impose their military presence in northern Iraq is strongly connected to the desire and intention to infringe on Iraqi sovereignty and constitutes another chapter in the aggression.

The paper stresses: The whole world never has seen such a precedent and never knew that relief operations for refugees are conducted by imposing a large-scale military presence.

AL-JUMHURIYAH says U.S. and allied insistence on military presence in northern Iraq aims at obstructing the march of dialogue and understanding among the Arab and Kurdish sons of Iraq—a march that has come a long way on the path toward handling the northern region's affairs.

The paper urges the world community to expose the dimensions and objectives of this presence, which, the paper says, harms the reputation of the world community and its organizations and agencies.

AL-QADISIYAH notes that what those troops are committing against a sovereign state and UN member constitutes colonialism and conceals conspiratorial schemes more dangerous than those which have already occurred.

In its editorial, AL-QADISIYAH, mouthpiece of the Ministry of Defense, accuses Washington, London, and Paris of trying to obstruct the effectiveness of the United Nations. It says the building of camps and expansion in northern Iraq by those troops violates UN resolutions. The paper notes that this was clearly demonstrated by obstructing the supervision of the Kurds' return to their homes, and says those acts constitute a serious precedent in thwarting the UN efforts.

AL-THAWRAH, mouthpiece of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, stresses that the radical, human solution to all current problems facing the Iraqis, particularly the Kurdish refugee issue, lies in the removing foreign troops from Iraq and lifting the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq for more than nine months.

In an article from the "Stand" column, AL-THAWRAH stresses that the main obstacle facing Iraq is that it is prevented by the blockade from using its financial and human resources to solve its problems. The paper says: The U.S. and Atlantic military presence in northern Iraq obstructs the efforts exerted by the Iraqi Government and the United Nations to resolve the refugee problem.

The paper concludes its article by asserting that discussion of suspect proposals aiming at exercising pressure on Iraq and interfering in its internal affairs and the insistence to link the foreign military presence with the continued economic blockade only mean continued moves within the framework of the conspiratorial scheme against Iraq.

Paper Warns of Resolutions To 'Extort' Wealth

JN1605091291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Baghdad, 16 May (INA)—AL-THAWRAH says that under the umbrella of the so-called international legitimacy, the wicked imperialist alliance seeks once again to impose the policy of starvation and colonialist persecution on Iraq.

In an article today, the paper says that the Iraqi people are now directly targeted by the most ferocious and despotic brute force of our age—a force motivated by hatred and revenge and steered by a colonialist mentality buried by time and rejected by peoples.

The paper says that the U.S.-Atlantic alliance, in addition to all its excesses and conspiracies against Iraq, is frantically seeking to issue new unjust resolutions against Iraq and its people to extort and mortgage Iraq's wealth for long periods and strip the country of its right to freely handle its national wealth.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: Our steadfast people, who have recorded epics of glory throughout their long history, will continue their steadfastness, further deepening their cohesiveness behind their historic leader. The illusions of the enemies, on the other hand, will only be a summer cloud, whose fate is well known.

U.S., UK 'Interference' in Internal Affairs Noted

JN1505164091 Baghdad Iraqi Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1418 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpt] In an editorial today under the headline "Failure Is the Fate of Interference in Iraq's Affairs," the newspaper AL- JUMHURIYAH says: British Prime Minister John Major and Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd make concordant statements and exchange roles. Sometimes, they call for a safehaven in northern Iraq. Other times, they call for the formation of a so-called international police force to be deployed in northern Iraqi areas. These statements and roles express the British Government's bad intentions and its attempts to interfere in Iraq's internal affairs. The fate of these intentions and attempts will be nothing but failure. They will not obstruct Iraq's reawakening and reconstruction. Moreover, Iraq strongly rejects these practices no matter what words are used to describe them. This is because such practices only confirm these bad intentions and attempts, which stem from malice against Iraq. They are aimed at punishing the Iraqi people and harming Iraqi sovereignty. Yes, Iraq today reiterates its rejection of interference in its internal affairs from any source and under any form or cover. Iraq knows well the dimensions and aims of such practices and understands their true purposes. Iraq knows the government exporters of such colonialist, rancorous practices and the [words indistinct] anytime.

Iraq came under the aggression of 30 states, including three major powers. In the aggression against Iraq, the most heavily armed, the richest, and the most technologically and scientifically advanced states assembled against Iraq. But when Iraq declared its approval of the UN Security Council resolutions, despite its official reservations about some articles of these resolutions, and when the Iraqi historic leadership, under brave leader Saddam Husayn, began a new stage of reconstruction, those harboring adverse intentions and the politicians of the known aggressive powers that have always antagonized Iraq, headed by the British Government's politicians and those talking on behalf of the U.S. Administration, should have respected the will of the Iraqis as a demonstration of respect for international laws and charters on the one hand, and as an expression, in the first place, of their adherence to their great slogans about international legitimacy and human rights on the other. Thus, they should have abandoned the logic of custodianship and interference in Iraq's internal affairs to prove, on the one hand, that they can rise to the level of their countries' titles, and provide the peoples of the world and their own nations with an better image of them on the other. They should have done so to provide an example of dealing with others on the basis of mutual respect, equality, fairness, and mutual benefit in such a way that reflects their countries' sizes and titles. [passage omitted]

Returning Refugees Reportedly Arrested, Executed

LD1205170591 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Another group of oppressed Iraqis entered Iran by crossing the frontier at Dasht-e Azadegan and were given shelter at Dasht-e Azadegan Red Crescent's Camp No. 1.

One of the Iraqi refugees said regarding the Saddam regime's general amnesty declaration: Ba'thist forces have arrested a large number of Iraqi refugees who have returned to their country and have executed several of them and taken the rest to unknown locations.

Rebel Radio Views Kurdish Delegation's Demands

NC1505155491 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] According to press sources in London, the Kurdish delegation led by Mas'ud Barzani, now in Baghdad, has demanded that the Iraqi flag, the Republic's emblem, the state's system, and the ruling regime be replaced. The delegation called for enabling the Kurds to take part in drawing up governmental policy and drafting the official decision according to their proportion in Iraqi society.

The press sources added that the autonomous rule plan the Kurdish delegation submitted stressed the need for establishing a new government to prepare for general elections in the country.

Rebel Radio: Officials Willing To Abandon Regime

NC1505152591 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 0442 GMT 15 May 91

[Excerpts] Out of its persistent fear that our revolutionaries might extend their [word indistinct] activity to Baghdad, the regime continues to adopt strict security measures inside the capital and on its approaches. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, more of the regime's henchmen, including senior party officials, diplomats, and military and security personnel, have sent written and oral messages to our revolutionaries expressing their willingness to cooperate and abandon the regime as soon as they receive a signal about this.

Rebel Radio Reports Tighter Baghdad Security

LD1505101891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] With an increase in the armed operations of popular forces against the Iraqi Government forces, security measures in Baghdad have intensified. According to the Central News Unit, Radio Revolutionary Iraq [name as heard] today announced this, adding: Increasing the number of checkpoints and inspections at entrances to Baghdad city, banning traffic on some main city roads at night, strengthening security forces near main government centers and institutions, and strengthening police patrol units, all show that the regime is concerned about the expansion of operations against the government by popular forces.

According to Radio Revolutionary Iraq, this is at a time when a number of statesmen and military personnel of the Iraqi regime have sent messages declaring that they are prepared to cooperate with the popular forces.

Radio Notes 'Long' Lines at Passport Offices

NC1605144591 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Opposition in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] On the first day the decision lifting the ban on travel abroad went into effect, hundreds of Iraqi citizens flocked to the immigration offices to obtain exit visas.

The citizens, who are trying to escape the hell of the tyrant's regime, have been standing in long lines in front of the passport offices since early morning, despite the tyrant regime's instructions preventing the banks from transferring foreign currencies abroad. The tyrant's regime imposed other restrictions on citizens who want to travel abroad, including settling the question of military service for those between 18 and 41. Dictator Saddam Husayn's regime also requires government employees seeking to travel to obtain prior approval from their ministries.

Despite the difficult economic conditions experienced by our people, Saddam Husayn's regime has required citizens who want passports to pay 150 dinars to get a one-time exit visa and 300 dinars for a multiple-exit visa. Citizens wishing to travel abroad are not permitted to take more than 25 dinars with them. Consequently, these citizens have to rely on money transferred from abroad for expenditures and for buying air tickets. The citizens also are required to travel by bus to the Jordanian capital of Amman and then board flights from there, because of the UN embargo on flights by Iraqi aircraft.

A great number of citizens are showing a desire to leave the homeland, after tyrant Saddam Husayn turned it into ruins as a result of the Gulf war into which he dragged Iraq. The war destroyed the infrastructure and services and left the citizens living under extremely harsh conditions.

Further Reportage on Secretary Baker's Visit

Meeting With Shamir 'Put Off'

TA1505131591 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] A report just in from our political correspondent Arye Golan: The meeting between Mr. Shamir and Secretary Baker that was supposed to begin now was put off, and it is not known when it will take place.

Meeting Resumed; Envoy To Go to Jordan

TA1505141791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The U.S. secretary of state or an emissary on his behalf will apparently leave for Jordan in a short while to meet with King Husayn. This has been learned by our political correspondent Arye Golan.

The meeting between Secretary Baker and the prime minister began at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem a short while ago. Minister Levi joined the meeting immediately upon his return to Israel. Our correspondent reports that the Americans brought to the meeting a document in which they summed up all understandings and disagreements on the regional conference issue.

Meeting Ends; Pazner Comments

TA1505160091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1520 GMT 15 May 91

[Interview with Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser, by political correspondent Arye Golan, outside the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] [Golan] The meeting with Baker has ended, and with us here is Mr. Avi Pazner, the prime minister's media adviser. Mr. Pazner, what is happening now?

[Pazner] The U.S. secretary of state has just left and returned to his hotel. The teams, though, are continuing their consultations here. The secretary will return here today, if necessary. If not, we will carry on with the talks tomorrow. We do not yet know the rest of the agenda.

[Golan] Now that Baker has left, about what are Shamir, Levi, and Arens currently holding consultations at the Prime Minister's Office?

[Pazner] I did not say who is holding consultations with whom now. It is true that both the foreign and defense ministers are here. Senior officials are also present, but I will not give any details now about the talks held today—neither about the content nor the topics discussed.

[Golan] Has Baker left the Israeli policymakers with any document on which they should decide now?

[Pazner] As I have said, I am not in a position to give you details while the talks are still going on. The talks are under way, in fact, whether Baker returns here this evening or the talks resume tomorrow. The talks are under way, and I will not elaborate on anything.

[Golan] Can you say something about the atmosphere? Is it optimistic and good? Is there a feeling of progress, or otherwise perhaps?

[Pazner] It is a matter-of-fact atmosphere. Thank you.

[Golan] Those are the remarks of Avi Pazner. It is hard to tell much at this stage. To the best of our knowledge, Secretary of State Baker arrived at the Prime Minister's Office at 1615 [1315 GMT] this afternoon with a document. It is very possible, although this is a mere assumption at the moment, that the Israeli ministers and prime minister are currently discussing it. It is also possible that Baker will send an emissary to Jordan to examine the possibility of limited negotiations with Jordan and the Palestinians without Syria.

Baker is now at the King David Hotel, awaiting the conclusion of the consultations at the Prime Minister's Office. He may return here this evening, or the talks may resume tomorrow.

Meridor on Peace Process, Syria

TA1505151691 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1400 GMT 15 May 91

[Interview with Justice Minister Dan Meridor by Rafi Reshef—live]

[Excerpt] [Reshef] Good evening, Justice Minister Dan Meridor.

[Meridor] Good evening.

[Reshef] Perhaps you can be of help to us. Do you know what is the basis for the foreign minister's optimism?

[Meridor] I do not wish to discuss the political process while it is in the very process of being formulated. I would not suggest drawing the curtain in the middle of the play. The main argument is not taking place today in the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem. The real gap is between the U.S. and Syrian positions.

[Reshef] So why did Baker bother coming here? Was it to be polite and pay his respects, or is he still hoping for some sign of concession from Israel?

[Meridor] I think that we have reached an impressive series of understandings with the United States. Everything was based on the assumption that we could launch a negotiation process that would begin at a conference attended by many parties, including the Syrians. It was the Americans who came up with that proposal. We had to assume that the Syrians would be willing to adopt a dramatic change in their basic positions, with which we are familiar....

[Reshef, interrupting] Are you actually trying to imply, Minister Meridor, that it was a mistake to try and tie all the strings at once?

[Meridor] I do not know. We gave this move all the chances we could. We went a long way to facilitate this move, not because the Americans asked us to do it, but because we are interested in furthering the peace process; that is our interest. This move may be successful. I would just like to say that, even if it does not succeed, we must not abandon the peace process and we must continue pursuing it....

[Reshef, interrupting] We are just about to get to that point....

[Meridor, continuing]...especially with the Arabs of Judaea and Samaria, and the Jordanians.

[Reshef] There, now you have nearly reached the question I intended to ask later regarding the issue of elections. Will that be the next step, assuming that this initiative fails? But even before we get to that.... [changes thought] It is already no secret that you left for the United States several weeks ago to try to coordinate things and prevent misunderstandings. Today, if I understand you correctly, you are saying that the address for complaints is Damascus. What is important right now is whether, in your estimate, the Syrian intransigence means that they can torpedo the entire conference, or whether the conference can be held without the participation of al-Asad?

[Meridor] In the past, the Syrians torpedoed many peace efforts. One can recall the Reagan initiative from 1982. We were not so enthusiastic about the plan, but the Syrians torpedoed Jordan's acceptance of that initiative. The intention of convening many countries together makes it easier for the Arabs to talk to us—at least so they claim—but at the same time it gives veto rights to the most extreme parties, and mainly to President al-Asad. I do not know if this initiative will work, but if it does, we are at the threshold of a new era. Even if it fails, I believe that the conditions throughout the world—and in Israel, Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip—are now such that it is worthwhile to launch something with the Arabs of Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip. If Jordan agrees to participate in a conference that launches a negotiations process, as we proposed, we will be happy to welcome it, even without Syria.

[Reshef] Yes, but the question is whether you think that we will now be permitted to develop an initiative, perhaps some version of elections in the territories, while the United States sits and waits patiently, or whether Israel will really be asked to turn the matter over to the United Nations, or whether we should expect various economic sanctions and serious pressure?

[Meridor] I do not think that there would be any point in pressure or steps against us, when the problem today really does not depend on any decision by Israel. Anyone looking at things in an objective manner, and not out of some desire for self-flagellation, anyone who looks at the whole picture realizes that the major problem is not here, even if we do still have some differences with the United States on one or two issues. I think that the core of the matter is not here. I would like to say, however, that the United States is not located in the region, while we have an interest in furthering such a move. I think we have the possibility of furthering it if we act correctly, even if the current initiative falls short of Secretary of State Baker's aspirations.

[Reshef] Assuming that Shim'on Schiffer [YEDI'OT AHARONOT political correspondent, interviewed earlier] was right about this being the end of a stage, James Baker will wind up his visit here, return to Washington, and not come back for a long time. It is very important just how determined the Americans and President George Bush are, and how much they intend to continue exerting efforts from there, even without the parties' cooperation.

[Meridor] It is true that the U.S. position is important. We never belittled it. The Israeli Government, however, cannot carry out its policy and reach decisions on the issues most crucial to Israel's security and to the political process, out of the fear that if it says no, the threat of the United Nations or economic sanctions will be raised. There is no such threat now, and I suggest we not tie ourselves down with what are currently imaginary threats. [passage omitted]

Levi 'Optimistic'

TA1505183791 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1713 GMT 15 May 91

[Interview with Foreign Minister David Levi by political correspondent Arye Golan State at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem—live]

[Text] [Golan] Foreign Minister David Levi has just ended his meeting with Baker, and our question to him is how the talk was.

[Levi] I was asked whether I am optimistic, and my response is that I am optimistic about all matters concerning the relations and coordination between Israel and the United States. As for the Arabs, they will have to prove whether their wish for peace is sincere.

[Golan] Mr. Levi, if you please, what are the Israeli and U.S. teams currently working on? Is it a document of understanding between the two sides?

[Levi] There have been understandings and principles in all our talks that need to be summed up, with the main point being the coordination between the United States and Israel. This coordination is indeed being worked into an understanding, in which we will also judge the Arab countries' desire for peace.

[Golan] Would you say that an important step toward the convening of a one-time conference was taken today?

[Levi] Do not rush things. I would say that today we summed up many actions, deliberations, and understandings. To consolidate all of them we had to sit down

to work, with the secretary of state too, in full coordination—the prime minister, the defense minister, and myself—and on the basis of our guidelines and agreements on principles. All of that is now being worked into a single framework. I hope it all will end in a very important understanding between Israel and the United States. In my view, that is the basis of the process. The Arab countries will have to prove whether they desire peace, and if so, they will find Israel and the United States ready.

[Golan] Do the understandings also cover the issue of not granting the United Nations any status in the negotiations?

[Levi] I will not elaborate now. Israel's positions are known....

[Golan, interrupting] The question is whether Baker accepted them.

[Levi] I will not give any details. We are making a joint effort so that Israel's initiative will stand on its own. At the same time, an understanding between Israel and the United States is very important, if it is possible—and it is possible. I was asked whether I am optimistic. My answer is yes, I am optimistic.

[Golan] I would imagine that there are also disagreements.

[Levi] No, no, it is not necessary to seek any cracks. We are making an effort; and Baker, too, is making an enormous effort. Everything else naturally depends on the Arab countries. An understanding with the United States is important on the road to peace.

[Golan] Will an emissary be sent to Jordan to see whether Husayn is prepared for separate negotiations?

[Levi] You are asking for details here.

[Golan] Well, none of the Israeli ministers who took part in the negotiations are prepared to supply details. As we just heard, Foreign Minister David Levi bade us farewell. He returned this afternoon from Brussels directly to the talks with Secretary of State Baker at the Prime Minister's Office; and he is optimistic, as he has stated time and again today.

A document of understanding between Israel and the United States is being worked on. Work on this will last until tomorrow morning, when another meeting will be held at the Prime Minister's Office at 0830 [0530 GMT] between U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the prime minister, and Ministers Levi and Arens. The effort to formulate this Israeli-U.S. document is continuing; and the foreign minister is optimistic, as we heard. There seems to be a basis for his optimism and apparently for the convening of a regional conference shortly, so as to promote the political process between Israel and the Arab countries and between Israel and the Palestinians.

Shamir on Need To Continue Efforts

TA1605104491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1000 GMT 16 May 91

[Excerpts] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is leaving Israel for Washington at this hour. The secretary ended nearly four hours of talks in Jerusalem with Prime Minister Shamir, Foreign Minister Levi, and Defense Minister Arens.

Baker told reporters that, with the exception of two issues, all the differences between Washington and Jerusalem have been resolved in connection with the convening of a regional peace conference. The two unresolved issues remain the role of the United Nations in the conference and whether it will hold more than one session. [passage omitted]

Standing next to Baker was Prime Minister Shamir. This is how he described the talks:

[Begin Shamir recording] It was a great pleasure to work together with the secretary of state for many hours yesterday and today and to invest many efforts in the success—I think it will be success—of the peace process. We will continue our work. We are sure that the secretary will continue his great efforts, and I wish him and ourselves full success and positive results in getting this peace process to a successful end. [end recording]

Shamir 'Willing' To Give UN Endorsing Role

TA1605115491 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1130 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Prime Minister Shamir today told U.S. Secretary of State Baker that Israel will agree to grant the United Nations a role at the closing conference at the end of the political process. Our political correspondent Natan Gutman reports that Israel will be willing to let the United Nations be a party to the endorsement of the agreements after they are signed. The United States, however, does not consider this an adequate role for the United Nations.

During the meetings, Israel also expressed its total opposition to any possibility of the conference continuing beyond the joint conference that will discuss the regional issues. Sources at the Prime Minister's Office reported that despite the differences, they received the impression that Baker intends to pursue the efforts to further the political process.

Levi-Baker News Conference

TA1605130391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1144 GMT 16 May 91

[Joint news conference with Foreign Minister David Levi and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker and unidentified correspondents at Ben-Gurion Airport, prior to Baker's departure—live]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Levi] Mr. Secretary of State, you are returning to your country today after exhaustive, but, I hope, fruitful efforts. The fruit is the chance to achieve peace in this region, which is weary of wars. We have devoted a great deal of time to the discussion of the ideas and the basic elements of this initiative. Today we have reached a number of understandings that bring us closer to our goal.

We in Israel are pleased with this progress and wish to extend to you our support in carrying out the efforts you have undertaken. All our work in securing these agreements took place in a somewhat strained atmosphere. Today, however, I am pleased that we all share these agreements. A great deal of patience and perseverance was required, and I think that our determination was thereby made evident. It is now up to the Arab states to demonstrate their desire, if it exists, to finally launch the meeting that will lead to direct negotiations with us, with the aim of resolving the long and brutal conflict in our region.

True, there are issues that have yet to be dealt with. No one, however, should think that there are great differences between us—as you yourself stated this morning—for the progress we have already made is far greater and more significant than what still lies ahead. Exactly one year ago I had the honor of meeting you in Washington as a representative of my government, and we had the opportunity to hold frank and candid talks about our goals. I am pleased that the path we chose to take will, I hope, prove to be the right one. Let us all pray, on the eve of a Jewish holiday, that just as we received our Torah on this holiday, so too now will our prayers be answered, that our efforts will not have been in vain, that our belief and the path we chose will prove fruitful, and that we shall finally reach the long awaited peace, which is the prayer of the people here in Zion. Let us all wish ourselves a great deal of strength, faith, and success. [passage omitted]

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Foreign Minister, is Israel prepared to assign any role whatsoever, even a symbolic one, to the United Nations in a possible regional conference, or does this issue still stand in the way of Syria's joining such a conference?

[Levi] We decided that we would not go into details. Syria must prove its willingness and desire to attain peace. We will eventually get to the parley eagerly awaited by all. There were many obstacles, but I think we have overcome them. So, let us not look for an excuse or an alibi. We must help the secretary of state, and I expect Syria to help him help it, as well as to help the entire region. Israel has made efforts, is making efforts, and will continue to make efforts for the sake of peace. [passage omitted]

[Levi] I would like to add to what Mr. Baker just said. Menahem Begin, the Israeli prime minister who attained peace with Egypt, said the following sentence, which should continuously reverberate in the ears of every politician: Wars are avoidable, but peace is unavoidable. I would add yet a few more remarks in response to the question to Mr. Baker as to whether he has any sense of guilt: Happy is the man who works for the sake of peace and who is accused of working for peace. The steps toward peace are nicer, better, and more promising than preparations for war. And, for his efforts, I bless him.

Commentary Claims Baker Mission Doomed To Fail

TA1405174691 Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew 14 May 91 p 3

[Commentary by Hanan Crystal: Nothing Prevents Them From Continuing To Bandy It About"]

[Text] No news in the Middle East. After hearing Damascus' nay, James Baker is arriving in Israel today for the fourth time in order to find out, as expected, that Shamir's rejectionism is no less firm than that of al-Asad.

Baker arrives in Israel on the second anniversary of the peace initiative of 14 May 1989, an initiative forced on Shamir by Yitzhaq Rabin, who was defense minister at that time. Eleven months ago Shamir recycled the 14 May gimmick and planted it in his government's basic guidelines, but exchanged winks with the right-wing ministers—who totally reject it—indicating that it will remain a dead issue. That does not, of course, keep Shamir and the majority of the Likud ministers from continuing to bandy it about for two years as evidence of Israel's intention to advance the peace process. In actual fact, however, any U.S. attempt to get a peace process started immediately will strike a sand bank, and not necessarily an Arab one.

Baker and President Bush failed to do their homework about the Israeli side. Had they studied the scene properly, they would have reached two conclusions: One, 18 of the 20 ministers—except for Der'i and Pinhasi of the weakened SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim]—oppose any territorial concession. Two, on the procedural issue of the character and duration of the regional conference, the ministers are divided into three groups: The first, headed by Sharon, which includes the right-wing ministers, acts and expresses itself openly against the procedural process out of fear that it will lead to substantive decisions. The second, headed by Shamir, publicly supports the convening of a regional conference but deliberately torpedoes it for the same reasons given for the first group. The third, under David Levi, and with the covert support of the Likud princes [Dan Meridor, Ehud Olmert, and Roni Milo], as well as Zvulun Hammer, do support attending a regional conference, not in order to reach an agreement, but to transfer responsibility for torpedoing the negotiations to the Arabs.

The conclusion: In view of the balance of forces in the Israeli court and the upcoming elections in the United States and, more importantly, in Israel, the chances that the Levi group will overcome the Shamir-Sharon coalition are low. Only a miracle can save the Baker mission.

Levi Holds News Conference After European Trip

TA1505141591 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1330 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi returned a short while ago from a three-day visit to Belgium. Upon his return, Levi said that he is optimistic regarding the continuation of the peace process. Our correspondent 'Idan Miller reports from Ben-Gurion Airport:

Good afternoon. Foreign Minister Levi telephoned Prime Minister Shamir, who is currently meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Baker, right after getting off the plane. Levi held a short news conference and immediately afterward left in his car for Jerusalem to join the meeting with Baker. At the news conference, Levi said that if the Arabs do not embrace peace, the pessimism is from their side. Israel, at any rate, is optimistic. If there is some progress, then there is only room for optimism, Levi asserted. I hope, he added, that the great efforts invested have not been in vain. Israel's sole aspiration, he reiterated, is peace.

[Begin Levi recording] Israel is optimistic regarding the chances for peace, because this is the focus of its political activity, and it was Israel that came out with a peace initiative. The Arabs are making things difficult. Some changes have slowly come to pass. We must now examine, together with the secretary of state, if the changes we anticipated have really been achieved. As for Israel, it has its parameters, upon which it achieved an understanding with the secretary of state, with the intention of moving forward toward peace. [end recording]

In the wake of recent foreign media reports that Levi represents the most dovish end in the Likud, Levi was asked whether he had been representing himself during his visit to Europe. The answer was clear and unequivocal; Levi said that he represents the Israeli Government and the Israeli Government only, adding that perhaps these reports show that the world finally regards Israel as sincere in its desire for peace.

Among other things, the inclusion of Israel in the EC was also raised during Levi's meetings with the EC leaders. Levi clarified that Israel is not being asked to pay any price for its integration into Europe. He said he believes that the inclusion of the European countries in the peace process seems to him a legitimate request and does not constitute capitulation.

Comments on European Role in Peace

TA1505145991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1340 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister David Levi has returned to Israel and in comments at the airport he said Israel is not opposed to Europe's participation in the political process if Europe accepts the principles of the peace initiative currently being worked out between Israel and the United States. Returning from meetings with EEC ministers, the foreign minister announced that Europe is offering to let Israel join the EEC as an associate member in return for Europe's participation in the political process. Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports from Ben-Gurion Airport:

Good day to you from Ben-Gurion Airport. The foreign minister rushed from the airport to the political meetings currently under way in Jerusalem. In any event, his declaration is that Europe's participation in the peace process is not at all tantamount to capitulation; if Europe, as one, accepts the principles and foundations that Israel is consolidating with Baker on the basis of Israel's peace initiative, Europe's participation is not objectionable.

[Begin Levi recording] Choosing between pushing Europe totally out of any process and a situation in which Europe accepts those principles and acts accordingly, as well as increases its ties with us and foresees a special status for Israel in the European arena later on....[pauses] I think this is an Israeli policy that is gradually proving itself and I am proud of it. [end recording]

The foreign minister promised his European hosts that he will bring the results of his talk with them to the Israeli Cabinet for discussion and decision.

What is Europe offering in return for participation in the political process? The bottom line here: associate membership in the EEC.

[Begin Levi recording] Israel should not be isolated. In the framework of Israel's economic struggle and its struggle for status, safety, and prosperity, relations with Europe will strengthen. The plans we submitted will receive priority consideration, I would say. We also raised the issue of aid for the absorption of aliyah and of special terms for Israel, along the lines of agreements Europe is now reaching with several countries that were not part of the 12- state framework but that have now obtained a variety of very important economic benefits. Our appeal was accepted with understanding and willingness, I would say. [end recording]

From here David Levi hurried to join the political talks under way at the Prime Minister's Office.

Sharon Plan To Turn Jerusalem Into 'Megalopolis'

TA1405101691 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 14 May 91 p 2

[Report by economic affairs correspondent Marit Gilat]

[Excerpt] Addressing the Knesset Finance Committee yesterday, Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon presented his plan for turning Jerusalem into a megalopolis surrounded by several satellite towns.

Sharon said that, at present, the city is enveloped by a densely populated horseshoe-shaped formation of Arab townships, and that the ratio of the Arab versus Jewish population is one to one. He asserted that his plan would

enable the capital city to reach a population of 1 million Jews. At present, there are 501,000 inhabitants in Jerusalem, about 366,000 of whom are Jewish.

The construction and housing minister explained that he intends to enlarge all the townships around Jerusalem, from 'Etzyon Bloc through Efrat to Solomon's Pools, and on to Tqoa', Qeydar, and Ma'ale Adumim.

According to him, about 35,000 to 40,000 housing units are under construction in Jerusalem itself, including 11,000 in and near Pisgat Ze'ev. Additional apartments under construction include 4,000 in Rekhes Shu'fat and 7,000 in Har Homa. [passage omitted]

Sharon on Scope, Intent of Construction

TA1305135891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] Construction and Housing Minister Ari'el Sharon again said that Israel's stay in Judaea and Samaria is a permanent fact, and there is no intention to withdraw from those areas.

Sharon made those remarks to our correspondent Eytan Almog after briefing the Knesset's Economic Committee on his ministry's activities. He said that approximately 4,500 apartments had been built in Judaea and Samaria over the past 18 months. Sharon noted that another 1,500 mobile homes, previously earmarked for settlements inside the Green Line, should be added to that number. The mobile homes were transferred to the territories after there was no demand for them within the Green Line. Sharon added that the Construction and Housing Ministry intends to flesh out the belt of Jewish settlements that surround Jerusalem from the North, the South, and the East.

Roundup of Incidents in Territories 14 May

TA1505113791

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 14 May carries a Jon Immanuel report on page 10: "Soldiers shot and wounded a man during a roundup of 20 suspects at a coffeehouse in Jaba', northwest of Nabulus, setting off a riot in which villagers threw stones at soldiers, who opened fire wounding three more people, including two children, Palestinian sources said."

The report adds that "the body of Ibrahim Hindi, 45, was found in the schoolyard of Huwwarah village where he worked. Hindi had been stabbed. Military and Palestinian sources said they did not know why he had been killed.

"In al-Birah, the body of Ahmad 'Ayyash, 47, was found with stab wounds, Palestinians said."

Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew on 15 May in a page 2 ITIM report says that "a resident of Bani Suhaylah in the Gaza Strip was murdered last night by masked men. Fahi al-Nasir Abu-Tayim, 42, was dead on arrival at al-Nasir hospital. He apparently was beaten to death by several masked residents."

Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English on 15 May in a page 12 ITIM report says the "body of a man from al-Am'ari refugee camp, near Ramallah, was discovered yesterday in a nearby stone quarry. His identity and the motive for the apparent murders are not known."

The report adds that a Hebron resident was arrested Tuesday "outside the post office on Salah al-Din Street in East Jerusalem, after police found a commando knife and a chain in his possession. The man claimed he kept them for self-defense."

"Three firebombs were thrown from the Old City walls at a bus stop near New Gate. They exploded in the road without causing damage. A fourth firebomb was thrown harmlessly at police who came to investigate the previous incident."

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 15 May in a page 9 report by Roni Shaqed says "the president of the Supreme Court yesterday agreed to a request by four Fatah activists who have been presented with deportation orders to order the holdup of their expulsions until a five-member High Court of Appeals hears their appeal again."

King Receives Telephone Call From President Bush

JN1505201791 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received a telephone call this evening from His Excellency U.S. President George Bush during which they discussed several aspects of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's peace endeavors in the region.

During the telephone call, the U.S. President expressed U.S. concern and determination to exert all possible efforts to help the parties in the Arab-Israeli conflict reach a just peaceful settlement on the basis of UN resolutions 242 and 338.

His Majesty King Husayn expressed to President Bush Jordan's sincere commitment, as usual, to the peace issue and to resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine question in a just manner through peaceful means based on international legitimacy that will return security, stability, and prosperity to all peoples in the region.

U.S. Attitude Blamed For Israeli Peace Stand

JN1505122591 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 15 May 91 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "An Opportunity That May Not Recur"]

[Text] Following his meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker yesterday, His Majesty King Husayn made it clear that the current opportunity for beginning a regional peace process and dealing with the two dimensions of the conflict—the Arab-Israeli and the Palestinian-Israeli—may not recur, in view of the grave repercussions that may result from the failure of the largest diplomatic process ever launched in the region, with the participation of the two superpowers, to find a just and comprehensive peaceful solution to the crisis in the region.

Although Jordan, as well as all the other Arab parties involved in the issue, has been exerting persistent efforts to facilitate the beginning of the peace process and put a negotiated end to the tension and instability that has prevailed in the region for several decades, these efforts and preparations were met with strong Israeli rejection and intransigence.

It can be said that the Arab inclination toward peace that climaxed during the U.S. secretary of state's repeated tours of the region, were also harshly rejected by the extreme rightist government in Israel, which, in turn, went so far in its rejectionist policy that we can conclude that the growing peace trend in the Arab side has led only to growing stubbornness and arrogance in the other.

In fact, the situation would not have reached this point if the United States, which has once again decided to try to bring peace to the Middle East, had not pursued a biased and conciliatory attitude toward Israel in the hope that such a policy would lead to a softening in Israel's position, although concrete and tangible evidence shows that such a policy, lacking resoluteness and determination, has increased Israel's extremism and encouraged it to reject peace.

Thus, James Baker, during his fourth and last tour, is facing a serious obstacle resulting from Israel's rejection—an obstacle that cannot be overcome without Washington reassessing its current policy and drawing suitable lessons from its intensive diplomatic experience in the region, especially since the United States itself has encouraged Israel's extremist trends by repeatedly providing political cover for its expansionist practices over the long past years.

Hence, as James Baker concludes his fourth diplomatic tour of the region, we feel more pessimistic over the peace opportunity, which His Majesty King Husayn described as unique, especially since Israel increases its preconditions every day and is doing everything to close the road to peace, without being appropriately deterred by the U.S. Administration, the owner of the peace initiative in the Middle East, in order to abandon its rejectionist policy and its arrogance.

It seems that Baker's peace mission is about to fail, especially since the facts in the declared Israeli position leave no room for believing that the U.S. secretary of state has succeeded, even partially, in getting Shamir's government to abandon its positions that are hostile to peace or to stop its rejection of Security Council resolutions and the principles of international legitimacy.

Editorial Blames U.S. For Failure of Peace Efforts

JN1305120591 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 May 91 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Isn't It Time for the United States To Get Angry?"]

[Text] Yitzhaq Shamir's statements before students of the Talmudic School in occupied Jerusalem left no doubt at all about the reality of Israel's rejection in part and parcel of the principle of trading land for peace. This is the same principle U.S. President George Bush declared on the eve of Secretary of State James Baker's departure on his first tour of the Middle East about two months ago to the day.

Perhaps the most important aspect of Shamir's statements, which echo with rejection and require no explanation, is their timing, especially since they coincide with the beginning of the U.S. secretary of state's fourth tour, which is aimed at pushing ahead with the peace process in the region through convening a multilateral peace conference as an introduction to the awaited start of establishing a just and fair settlement in the Middle East.

We believe that Shamir's statements rejecting the principle of withdrawal from the occupied territories were really addressed to the United States, which has taken

upon itself the task of breaking the stalemate in the region and launching a process of negotiations, whose final objective will be to urge Israel to withdraw from the Arab territories it has been occupying for almost a quarter of a century.

Naturally, the Arabs were not surprised at such a belligerent Israeli stand expressed by Shamir in the clearest, very specific terms, especially since the series of stands, statements, and Israeli practices on the ground continue to tirelessly confirm this belligerence. U.S. diplomacy has been wanting to play down the effects of the violent clash between this belligerence and the efforts to find an appropriate way out of this difficult stalemate.

It appears that the U.S. eye-shutting policy and the conciliatory stands Washington has continued to adopt regarding the Israeli intransigence throughout the past years have actually provided Shamir, Sharon, and others among the ranks of the fanatic rightist government in Israel with the motive to take such stands, unrestrained in their arrogance and defiance of every peace initiative, even if this initiative comes from the United States itself.

Therefore, we believe that Shamir's latest statements are very clearly addressed to the U.S. Administration with the message that all James Baker's tours in the region, past and present, are wasted efforts by the United States and will not bear fruit. Washington should, therefore, save itself time and effort and abandon, in the final analysis, its diplomatic efforts aimed at making Israel proceed just one step down the road to peace.

Therefore, we wonder bitterly as we watch all this arrogance Israel is showing toward Washington, and all the successive slaps in the face that Shamir and Sharon are giving Baker and Bush, we wonder bitterly: Hasn't the time come for the United States to get angry at the conduct of its spoilt Middle Eastern child, especially since the Israeli deeds, words, and statements continue to increase in their arrogance and imprudence, and exceed the limits of stubborness, rejection, and belligerence.

While watching Israel increase its intransigence, we also see an increase in diplomatic peace efforts in the region. There is no doubt that the United States, to whom the recent Israeli statements were addressed, is the first and last country responsible for all the evidence of failure surrounding its current Middle East diplomacy. Washington itself is giving Shamir more rope to speak against peace and international legitimacy. Proof of this is that the United States does blush with shame over such Shamirite statements, neither does it knit its brow in anger regarding all the Likudist policies wagering on thwarting the United States in the Middle East.

Al-Masri on Arab League Meeting, Baker Tour

JN1305141291 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 13 May 91

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri by correspondent Suhayl Khuri; date and place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Khuri] Mr. Minister: It was announced today that you will lead the Jordanian delegation to the Arab foreign ministers' meetings in Cairo on Wednesday. What are your views as you prepare to leave?

[Al-Masri] First of all, this is the first meeting at the ministerial level for the Arab League Foreign Ministers Council since the end of the Gulf war. The meeting will be held amid certain circumstances following the end of the Gulf war and amid international efforts to resolve the Palestine question, or start peace talks on the Arab-Israeli conflict. The Arab situation, as we know, is unstable, and there are sharp divisions. This is the first opportunity in which the ministers are meeting at this political level. On the agenda, the principal issue is: To elect a new Arab League secretary general. As you know, Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid is the only candidate, and I believe there is unanimity to elect him. The ministers will discuss the Arab situation in general, and inter-Arab coordination. Things will not be easy for the ministers because of the divisions we know about. Jordan—at least Jordan—wants this opportunity to be the starting point for negotiations at that level in order to organize the Arab conditions as much as possible.

[Khuri] Mr. Minister: Do you believe that joint Arab action will enter a new phase after Wednesday?

[Al-Masri] This is our hope. The meeting will at least be a symbol for joint Arab action entering a new phase—this meeting in Cairo, after the league headquarters have been moved to Cairo from Tunis, is an important symbol. Our objective in Jordan will be a new start for joint Arab action. I cannot now talk about the extent of our success and anothers' reaction. However, I am very hopeful that we will be able to restore ties, even if gradually.

[Khuri] Where are the efforts for settlement in the Middle East?

[Al-Masri] So far, what James Baker has achieved, including ideas and plans concerning the peaceful settlement in the region, is not clear to us. He has not yet arrived in Jordan, and we do not know what he has obtained. What is important, however, is that the matter now concerns Israel and the extent of Israel's response to the U.S. efforts and the application of international legitimacy. Jordan and the other Arab countries have declared their readiness to be flexible to an acceptable level, and this level does not go beyond the principles which all Arabs accept: the application of international legitimacy, and the principle of territory for peace. Therefore, James Baker must get some—I do not want to say concessions, because they are not, in fact, concessions—but he must get new ideas from Israel that would facilitate the start of the peace process. Maybe after Baker leaves the region, the complete ideas will become clearer to us, because the last leg of his tour will be Israel, which is the principal leg.

[Khuri] We thank you, Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri.

[Al-Masri] You are welcome.

King Receives U.S. War College Delegation

JN1205180591 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] At the Royal Hashemite Court today, His Majesty King Husayn received a delegation from the U.S. War College led by Dr. (Terry Dubbel), member of the college Guidance Committee. His majesty outlined regional developments in the aftermath of the Gulf crisis, efforts being made to promote a fair solution to the Arab-Israeli dispute, and the Palestine question. His majesty stressed the need to work for the establishment of security and stability in the Middle East under a just and comprehensive peace.

Attending the meeting were the chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, the chief of General Staff, and his majesty's military secretary. Also present was the American ambassador in Amman.

USSR Urged To Use Jewish Emigration in Bargaining

JN1105082091 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 11 May 91

[Editorial: "Wagering on the Soviet Position"]

[Text] Perhaps our best interpretation of the nature of Soviet Foreign Minister Bessmertnykh's tour of the region, as part of the diplomatic efforts to seek a just and comprehensive solution, is that Moscow still has the political will to prove its role in the most important and dangerous issue that continues to preoccupy the world: namely, the Palestine question and the Arab-Zionist conflict.

Although we hope to see an influential Soviet role and stature on the international political arena, and an ability to curb the U.S. manipulation and monopoly of international political authority, as was the case during the cold war, we feel that Bessmertnykh's visit is of great importance and emphasizes the Soviet Union's desire to forcefully hold onto the cards it has left, even if they are few.

Despite all that has happened, we continue to differentiate between the United States, which extends continuous support to the Zionist aggression, and the Soviet Union, which over many decades supported the Arab issues. The Soviet Union's positions still differ from those of the U.S. The most prominent example is that Moscow did not participate in the ugly, Washington-led aggression against Iraq, for which Washington pooled armies from thirty countries, and refused to be among these armies. We, however, objected to its political position during the crisis.

The positive results of the Soviet minister's visit to Amman and his constructive and fruitful talks with His Majesty King Husayn and Jordanian officials increase our confidence in a possible effective role by Moscow within the framework of a concentrated international effort to pressure Israel to accept international legitimacy, represented in Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

What increases our optimism is that despite the great U.S. political and economic pressure on the Soviet Union, there has been no perceptible change in the Moscow position on the Arab-Zionist conflict and the Palestine question. In his statements while seeing off the Soviet minister, Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri stressed this point by saying that there is no change in the Soviet position on the settlement, and that the Soviets support the just Arab issues. Like us, they call for implementing international legitimacy and Resolutions 242 and 338, and recognizing the Palestinians' political rights, and we have agreed with them on this, he stressed.

Certainly, no matter how positive the Soviet or European positions are, they will be useless unless they are accompanied by effective action in the form of pressure on Israel, and the pressure of the U.S. Administration to influence Israel.

Moscow has an important card which we hope it will play in this regard; namely, the card of massive Jewish emigration to occupied Palestine. It can, if it wishes to do so, pressure the Israeli Government by linking continuous emigration with halting the ongoing settlement in the occupied Arab territories, which is a major obstacle to peace. In his statements in Amman, Minister Bessmertnykh clearly referred to this point.

We realize that the chances for a just, peaceful settlement will be real when there is an international balance to impose international legitimacy, which we hope the Soviet Union will achieve. International legitimacy is an indivisible whole. It must be implemented in Palestine, as it was in the Gulf.

Bessmertnykh Statement on Settlements Hailed

JN1105064591 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 11 May 91 p 1

[By Nirmin Murad, JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Excerpt] Amman—Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh Friday concluded two days of "very constructive" talks with Jordan's top leadership on the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestinian problem underlining the two countries' common understanding on the need to implement international legitimacy and end Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories before a regional conference starts.

"We have a very good understanding and I am very very satisfied with the results of our talks," His Majesty King Husayn told reporters at a joint press conference with Mr. Bessmertnykh Thursday.

Jordan was especially pleased with the Soviet official's statement on the need to end Jewish settlements in the

occupied West Bank before a conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict and Palestinian problem starts.

"I just can't forsee or conceive, can't accept a situation when the peace conference is in session while the settlements are going to be built," Mr. Bessmertnykh told reporters.

He even indicated that Moscow might use Soviet Jewish emigration as a lever to halt new Israeli settlements in the occupied territories.

"I do not want to exclude anything when we talk about the necessity to stop construction of settlements on the occupied territories," he said.

The issue of Soviet immigration to Israel was one of the topics expected to be brought up by the Jordanian side with the Soviet foreign minister. However, the focus remained on Jewish settlements in the occupied territories; by extension and inherence, the massive influx of Soviet Jews to Israel and its negative consequences on peace effort in the form of increased settlements in the occupied territories.

Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri had told the Jordan Times Wednesday that Jordan believes the Soviet Union holds "a very important card because it can control the massive influx of Soviet Jews into Israel."

"The question is going to be solved," Mr. Bessmertnykh promised Thursday. "The Soviet Union and others are going to deal with the problem straightforwardly as one of the things to be solved before a conference starts."

But, before departing Jordan for Israel, Mr. Bessmertnykh described the massive influx of Soviet Jews into Israel as "part of our general policy of democratisation in the Soviet Union."

Jordanian officials say the immigration would hinder U.S.-led efforts to bring Israel to exchange territories in return for peace with Arabs.

More than 200,000 Soviet Jews have arrived in Israel since Moscow relaxed its emigration policy two years ago. Several thousand have settled in the occupied territories. [passage omitted]

Bessmertnykh, U.S. Remarks No Cause for Optimism

JN1205125991 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 12 May pp 1, 15

[Editorial: "Baker and Bessmertnykh Together in the Middle East"]

[Text] At a time when U.S. Secretary of State James Baker was due to arrive at the first stop of his fourth tour, Soviet Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh, who is due to conclude his first tour to a number of capitals in the region, cautioned against the tragic dangers that could result from failing to hold the proposed peace conference, and warned that there are a number of obstacles on the road to holding such a conference.

Although the prevailing atmosphere of Baker's fourth tour indicates a stronger U.S. will to hold the aspired peace conference, the tone of the Soviet foreign minister's statements in Cairo does not call for much optimism, especially since these statements followed intensive talks between Bessmertnykh and Israeli officials, who appear to be continuing to place various obstacles on the road to peace through a long series of preconditions.

Shamir's government, which portrayed unprecedented intransigence in the face of the diplomatic efforts being made on more than one level, is still working to torpedo the available peace opportunity through a series of provocative moves, such as building more settlements, together with a number of positions that clearly indicate that it is determined to torpedo the current diplomatic efforts to establish just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Israel still refuses to negotiate under the UN umbrella, and objects to the participation of the European Community in the conference. It makes the condition that the Soviet Union must restore diplomatic relations with it as the price for its supervision of the opening ceremony of this conference, not to mention its strong rejection of Palestinian representation, which it is ready to undertake itself, and its continuous disregard for the principles of international legitimacy and UN Security Council resolutions, aside from other preconditions and impossible positions that are rejected by all other parties.

Hence, we realize the meaning of Bessmertnykh's cautionary statements in Cairo following his talks in Israel with the pillars of the Shamir government.

We also realize the meaning of the U.S. hints that Baker's tour, which has just begun, will be the final tour that U.S. diplomacy will make to the region if Israel continues to reject a peace conference based on Security Council resolutions under the UN umbrella.

Despite all this, we have no doubt that the United States through its great influence on Israel is capable, if it so wishes, to pave the way for peace in the Middle East. This undoubtedly requires the United States to practice a firmer, more determined Middle East policy, and to adopt clear political positions in this region that cannot be subject to interpretation by the Shamir government, which has become accustomed to rejecting any peace initiative without, even once, fearing the consequences.

As we follow the Baker-Bessmertnykh meeting to be held in Cairo today with great interest, and see in it a clear indication of an unprecedented international agreement on the Middle East, we hope that Washington and Moscow would apply all their international stature in support of the current peace process and exert all their influence on the theater of events in the region to save this last chance for peace in the Middle East.

French Defense Minister Continues Official Visit

Badran Meets Joxe

JN1205121891 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Mudar Badran, prime minister and defense minister, received in his office today French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe. Salim Masa'idah, deputy prime minister and interior minister, attended.

They continued the Jordanian-French talks relating to the continued military cooperation, improving bilateral ties, the latest developments in the region, and the expected European, particularly the French, role to achieve a just and comprehensive solution to the Middle East problem.

The meeting was also attended by Mr. Joxe's two assistants and the French ambassador in Amman.

Al-Masri Receives Minister

JN1205153291 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri received in his office today French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe to discuss bilateral ties and look into ways to develop them. They also talked about matters of mutual interest. The French ambassador in Amman attended the meeting.

Chief of Staff Meets Minister

JN1205182191 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] General Fathi Abu-Talib, chief of the General Staff, this morning received French Defense Minister Pierre Joxe and his delegation. The French minister was given an official welcome on arrival at the General Command. An honor guard saluted the guest, who then reviewed them.

Later, the chief of the General Staff and the French minister talked about general regional developments, Jordan's strategic location, and its importance for regional stability and for a peaceful resolution of regional problems on foundations of peace and fairness. The chief of the General Staff also touched on relations between Jordan and France. He praised France's historically fair and pro-human rights record. The two sides discussed military agreements between France and Jordan, which have been held in abeyance due to the Gulf crisis. The chief of General Staff noted that Jordan is having difficulty in the acquisiton and delivery of weapons, equipment, and spare parts. He urged our friends around the world, especially the French, to understand Jordan's important and strategic position among the countries of the region and our principled, consistent stand on the need for a peaceful resolution of the region's problems, as well as the great efforts his majesty the supreme commander is making to promote a fair and lasting settlement safeguarding the rights of the peoples of the region and assuring its future security, peace, and stability.

The chief of General Staff noted that the Jordanian military is seeking to diversify its sources of arms and to keep abreast of modern technology and military advances. He called for increased military cooperation in the interests of the two friendly countries.

For his part, the French minister said he was glad to be visiting Jordan in response to an invitation by His Majesty King Husayn and according to directives from the French president. He said that France and Jordan maintain close ties based on cooperation and mutual respect. The French minister said he understands Jordan's balanced role in the stability of the region and His Majesty King Husayn's commendable efforts to promote a fair peace. He praised the efficiency of the Jordanian Armed Forces.

On the military agreements between the two countries, the French minister said he was aware of Jordan's economic and military difficulties. Mr. Joxe said he would raise the issue with his government and especially with the president in his capacity as the supreme commander of the French Armed Forces with a view to finding correct and prompt solutions.

Attending the meeting were aides of the chief of General Staff, the commander of the Royal Air Force, the French ambassador, and the French military attache in Amman.

Afghanistan

Pakistan's Claims of Overflights Denied

LD1305174291 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Text] The Republic of Afghanistan charge d'affaires to Islamabad was summoned to Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 30 April. He was informed about eleven cases of alleged violations of Pakistan's airspace by Afghan jets, and the launching of Oregan missiles into Pakistani territory by the armed forces of the Republic of Afghanistan.

Pakistan's charge d'affaires to Kabul was summoned this morning to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, and a protest note of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan was conveyed to him by the head of the Ministry's first political department.

In connection with these accusations, the Pakistani Government should be informed that no military flight has taken place outside the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan, and no Oregan missile has been launched outside the territory of the Republic of Afghanistan.

The Pakistani Government should not ignore this aggression and interference by making such baseless accusations, and should not distort the truth to the people of Pakistan and the world.

After comprehensive investigation of this issue, the Republic of Afghanistan Government considers these allegations by Pakistani authorities to be far from the truth, and emphatically rejects them.

Kabul Reports Qeysar Under Government Control

LD1405171791 Kabul Domestic Service in Dari 1330 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] According to reports from Qeysar district, Faryab Province, contrary to the false claims by the Afghan opposition in Peshawar, armed forces units are bravely defending their positions, and state sovereignty is being consolidated in the district. The people are continuing their daily life and work.

In a telephone conversation with BAKHTAR, the state authorities in Qeysar district, Faryab Province, revealed that the opposition in Peshawar's groundless claim to the effect that Qeysar district had fallen (?to the opposition), is a mere (?lie). Qeysar not only has strong state sovereignty, but as a result of the country's armed forces' activities the security zone of that district has been extended and the local people are pursuing their normal life without the least concern.

Mujahidin Claim Complete Control of Khajaghar

BK1505125191 Hong Kong AFP in English 1228 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 15 (AFP)—Mujahidin forces led by Commander Ahmed Shah Mas'ud widened their grip on Khajaghar Wednesday, taking the military bases surrounding the northeastern Afghan city, his spokesman said here.

"The headquarters of the 55th division (of the Afghan army) and all its buildings and their equipment have been conquered by the mujahidin," said Ahmed Zia, Mr. Mas'ud's brother.

Cmdr. Mas'ud's forces, allied with two other Afghan rebel factions, had taken the city Monday.

Just 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the Soviet border, Khajaghar became the administrative centre for Takhar Province after the fall of the provincial capital of Taloqan in 1988.

Rebel sources said the city was defended by several thousands soldiers and militia.

No casualty figures were contained in various guerrilla statements, but a first statement released Monday by Cmdr. Mas'ud spoke of "hard fighting" and the capture of several militia groups.

The attack, launched Saturday, was the first against the government this year by Cmdr. Mas'ud, 38, who is sometimes called "The Lion of Panjshir."

According to the rebels, the loss of Khajaghar was a "tough blow" for the Kabul government, which lost the strategically important city of Khowst March 31 and two other districts in the following weeks.

Since the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in 1989, the guerrillas have suffered a series of reverses which damaged their credibility in the United States, their main sponsour.

But they have rearmed with supplies from Pakistan and appear determined to push in the coming months for the fall of the communist government in Kabul, and its replacement by some sort of Islamic leadership.

Meanwhile, Moscow continues to send tens of millions of dollars monthly to support the Kabul government, Western sources say.

Later, the pro-rebel news agency MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] said 5,000 armed militia and soldiers were captured during the fighting for the control of Khajaghar.

The division 55 was based on a strategic hill on the bank of Kokcha River and was considered as an "important base of the Kabul regime," it said in a dispatch released here.

According to another report quoted by MIDIA, the mujahidin launched other operations further north, in Khwaja Gihar and Rostaq districts.

In their bid to conquer the Haqeem Siddiqi's militia headquarters in Yangi Qa'leh district, the guerrillas have captured 25 government posts, the agency said, adding that fighting was going on.

Weapons, Ammunition Captured in Herat

LD1505223691 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] In the course of a mopping-up operation by the Armed Forces in Zindajan district in Herat yesterday, a large amount of ammunition was captured. According to a report by the BIA [BAKHTAR INFORMATION AGENCY] military section, the captured ammunition includes 12 Sakr-60 rockets, 35 Sakr-30 rockets, and 105 Sakr-20 rockets, 150 ground-to-ground rockets, 750 shells for recoilless guns, and 115,000 rounds of various types of ammunition. Similarly, during the operation a truck loaded with arms and ammunition, two ammunition depots, one food depot, and one clothing depot were captured, and several of the extremists' hideouts and fortifications were destroyed.

Mujahidin Seize Three Districts in Takhar Province

BK1505155191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Reports say that the Mujahidin in Afghanistan have freed three more districts in the northwestern province of Takhar from the Kabul regime. They are: Jahangir Qal'eh), Dasht-e Qal'eh and Khajaghar. The number of districts seized by the mujahidin after the victory over Khowst may have risen to eight. A report says that the mujahidin have tightened their grip on Khajaghar by capturing the military bases around the city and the headquarters of the Kabul regime's 55th Division today.

Bar Highways Near Soviet Border

BK1605102091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1013 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 16 (AFP)—Forces led by Afghan Rebel Commander Ahmed Shah Mas'ud have blocked two highways, obstructing army reinforcements to the city of Khajaghar, a mujahidin spokesman said Thursday. The mujahidin claimed earlier this week to have taken the city. Cmdr. Mas'ud's spokesman in Pakistan, Ahmed Zia, said the mujahidin had succeeded since Saturday in blocking the Sher Khan Bandar-Kunduz and Abdan-Khajaghar highways. Fighting is continuing in those areas, close to the Soviet border, he added. Elsewhere, mujahidin led by Commander Hafiz Arbab were ringing the city of Maimana, capital of the Faryab Province, Mr. Zia said. The guerrillas have stepped up their operations, especially in northern and southeastern Afghanistan, since their March 31 capture of the strategically important city of Khowst.

Report on Council of Ministers Session 13 May

LD1405113491 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 13 May 91

[Excerpts] The prime minister's press office has told BAKHTAR that a session of the Council of Ministers this morning was presided over by the esteemed Fazl Haq Khaleqyar, prime minister of Afghanistan. The meeting discussed important national and international issues, and decisions were made.

At the beginning of the session the prime minister drew the government's attention to further supervision of administrative matters, to the consolidation of theory and practice of unity, and to the intensification of the campaign against bureaucracy and corruption. He said: As a government of national reconciliation and national unity, we, as we have promised, work without discrimination for the prosperity, welfare, and tranquility of the people of Afghanistan but what we do is not sufficient in comparison with the needs of our people. The scope of service to the people should further expand and universalize from top to bottom, and all our capabilities should be exploited in the interest of the country and the betterment of the administration situation.

Describing state officials and members of the party and those who are not members of the party as a single body having a common fate, esteemed Khaleqyar added: In the current stage, the country needs unity, sympathy, and hard work and everyone can assume government positions on the basis of merit and competence, truthfulness to the country and the people, and piety.

The prime minister emphasized the need for a campaign against negative phenomena and for implementation of the Council of Ministers' resolutions and orders. He said: We are seriously striving to remove bureaucracy to some extent through simplification of work procedures and a direct approach to people, and to curtail the involvement of people motivated by profit-seeking. But the campaign against negative aspects and corruption in administration requires more effort.

Giving examples of bureaucracy and corruption in some ministries, the prime minister asked ministers to use their lawful authority fully, and to prevent lengthy work procedures in offices, and to pay serious attention to the implementation of the resolutions and orders of the Council of Ministers of the armed forces to address the people's grievances regarding problems caused by security posts in charge of highways and of control posts.

The prime minister instructed the Ministries of Commerce and Light Industries and Food to accelerate the distribution of rationed goods, especially flour, tea, ghee, soap, and sugar, regularly and uniformly to the proper

stores. All ministries and administrations should exercise due discretion on the indentifiction of married and unmarried persons so that the rations are given to really deserving persons.

The prime minister said: There is some disorder in the distribution of rationed goods. A number of ration coupon holders have received goods for the first months of this year, whereas goods for the last months of the previous year have not yet been given to some others. The relevant ministries and administrations should make serious efforts to correct this shortcoming. [passage omitted]

Commerce Minister Zakim Shah presented a report to the Council of Ministers on an agreement on the exchange of goods between Afghanistan and the USSR concluded during his recent visit to that country. The session described the result of the working visit and the talks of the Afghan delegation with Soviet authorities as fruitful. The USSR has promised any kind of necessary help with the settlement of goods deliveries to the Afghan side, technical aid for projects and the participation of that country in the United Nation's Salam program. Additional demands of the Afghan side for the delivery of larger quantities of fuel, sugar, wheat, chemical fertilizer, the allocation of monetary funds for balancing the clearing accounts and dealings, the granting of loans for consumer goods and food, deferring the payments on expired debts, the repair of aircraft belonging to Ariana Afghan Airlines and some other economic, commercial, and technical issues have also been considered by the Soviet side. [passage omitted]

The ministers of education, labor and social security and finance presented reports on their working visits to Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic, PRC, Canada, and the United States.

Education Minister Ma'suma 'Ismati Wardak described the results of the Afghan delegation's visit to the Uzbek as useful and stated that protocols were signed on the exchange of cultural delegations, the training, treatment, and recreation of Afghan teachers, and the sending of students from Ministry of Education schools and education institutions to that republic.

Saleha Faruq E'temadi, the minister of labor and social security, presented a report to the Council of Ministers on the participation of the Afghan delegation in 12th conference of Asia-Pacific labor ministers in Beijing. He described as useful for the situation of our country the results of the conference and the exchange of views with the PRC authorities in respect of employment, training, and technical aid of the countries of specific institutions zone [as heard] and international organizations.

Then Finance Minister Muhammad Hakim presented a report to the Council of Ministers on the participation of the Afghan delegation, participated in by (Abdol Wahab Asefi), director general of the Central Bank, in 24th session of the Asian Development Bank in Canada, talks with officials in charge of temporary committees and the executive directors of the World Bank and the IMF in Washington. During the Afghan delegation's visit to Canada the president of Asian Development Bank expressed regret that Afghanistan is not receiving aid from the bank and promised that a delegation shall be sent to Kabul to study and assess projects for which there is a possibility of finance by the bank taking Afghanistan's situation into account. Similarly, the deputy head of the World Bank assured the Afghan delegation that he will send a delegation at the beginning of the month of June until July to study some specific projects. The IMF will also send a representative in the composition of a World Bank delegation to Afghanistan. [passage omitted]

India

Offer To Reprocess Spent Nuclear Fuel Reported

BK1605004891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1152 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] New Delhi, May 15 (AFP)—India has offered to reprocess spent nuclear fuel from foreign reactors to earn foreign exchange, the PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported Wednesday.

India's Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) has told the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency that it is ready to offer reprocessing services to other countries on a commercial basis, PTI said.

Countries that have been accumulating spent fuel would be able to ship it to India, where plutonium would be sifted from the waste, the report said.

Plutonium is a key ingredient in the fabrication of nuclear warheads, but the AEC stressed that its offer was conditional on prospective clients agreeing to take back the hazardous radioactive waste.

The world has some 125 nuclear reactors whose spent fuel could be available for India to reprocess, PTI quoted AEC Chairman P.K. Iyengar as saying. He did not say how much India hoped to earn from the offer.

BJP Lok Sabha Candidate Killed in Bihar

BK1505170691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] In Bihar, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] candidate for Gaya parliamentary constituency and a former MP [member of parliament], Mr. Ishwar Chaudhry, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen this evening. According to DIG [deputy inspector general] of police, Mr. Chaudhry was attacked when he was going on a jeep near village Kachautia under Konch police station in Gaya District. The miscreants also set the jeep on fire.

In Patna, the chief minister, Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, met the governor, Mohammad Shafi Qureshi, today and apprised him about the law and order situation and

security arrangements for the poll. The state cabinet also reviewed the arrangements for the elections.

In New Delhi, the Election Commission said that it is still assessing reports on the situation in Bihar.

Congress-I Expels 31 Haryana Members From Party

BK1505170491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The Congress-I high command has expelled 31 Congress men in Haryana, including six former ministers, from the party. A Congress-I press release in Chandigarh says the action has been taken as they were contesting the assembly election against the party's official candidates.

*Janata Dal Advantage in Bihar Seen in Jeopardy

91P40265 New Delhi JANSATTA in Hindi 25-27 April 91 p 12

[Article by Harishankar Vyas: "The Situation in Bihar"]

[Excerpts] It is frankly impossible to gauge the upcoming vote in Bihar. The issues are, however, clear. The shadows of Mandal and Mandir are all-encompassing [controversies over job reservations for backward castes and over building a Hindu temple on a disputed site]. Congress-I's 'stability' slogan is irrelevant [in Bihar]. Congress-I has a core of voters due to its opposition to the reservations. Congress-I is banking on the anti-Yadav [Bihar's chief minister] sentiment. BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] will get a percentage of this vote.

It is particularly difficult to gauge the Bihar vote. Conversations with the common people does not help in clarifying this situation and insightful analysis has not appeared. On the streets of Patna, one can hear rickshaw wallahs and other common people saying, "to whom should I give my vote?" Perhaps one can only look at the prevailing atmosphere within each constituency on a case by case basis.

In Patna and its environs, one can see the possibility of the vote by caste groups slipping away. The question has arisen of whether or not the backward castes' vote will be split between Yadav [Janata Dal] and others. Will the Mandal Commission issue really get the vote for Janata Dal? How will Janata Dal (S) fare? How about the Indian People's Front? Would these groups not further cut into Janata Dal's vote bank? [Passage omitted on 1989 election results]

Congress-I, Janata Dal (S) and BJP all agree that the Janata Dal's solid base is only due to Lalu Yadav. Just as the backward caste vote may be split, Yadav still may lose the Muslim vote to Congress-I. Yadav has his limits. Private organizations and government lawyers have all lashed out at Yadav. Naturally, an anti-Yadav reaction has broken out. Where the Janata Dal (S), Congress-I and BJP have strong candidates, they will certainly get a lot of votes from backward castes.

How is this possible? In October, Bihar was engulfed in the expression of sentiments for and against the Mandal reccomendations. Northern and Central Bihar saw fighting in the streets. Various groups have been settling scores ever since. [Passages omitted on incidents in Bihar] As a result the Janata Dal is seen as causing these communal incidents.

In the end, the Janata Dal will lose the vote of the backward castes and Muslims. The votes [in each constituency] will be given on the basis of the individual candidate's image. Although originally the contest was between the Janata Dal [pro-Mandal] and the Congress-I [anti-Mandal], now the race has become ambigious. This ambiguity will benefit the BJP, making their presence a factor. Many BJP candidates may prove more acceptable than those of the Janata Dal or Congress-I.

Janata Dal still has the advantage in Bihar. It is, however, extremely doubtful that they will again get 31 seats as they did in 1989. Of course, the Janata Dal is only running 38 candidates, having given the remaining seats to their allies, the leftists and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha. It is simply impossible to repeat the 1989 election results. The Congress-I and BJP will increase their seats [in the 1991 parliamentary elections]. [passages omitted detailing Congress-I and BJP election campaigns]

*BJP Seen Making Gains in Bengal

91AS0921A Calcutta THE TELEGRAPH in English 30 Apr 91 p 4

[By Ranjit Roy]

[Text] Barasat, 29 April: Riding on the crest of Hindu sentiment against unchecked influx of Bangladeshi nationals, the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is slowly emerging as a formidable political force in the areas bordering North 24-Parganas with Bangladesh.

The rise of the BJP's popularity among a large section of Hindu refugees, particularly those belonging to Scheduled Caste communities, in most of the Assembly segments under Barasat and Bashirhat Lok Sabha constituencies, has unnerved seasoned campaigners of both the Left Front and the Congress(I). They are now busy assessing the extent of damage the BJP will inflict by eroding their vote banks this time.

Though the communal divide existed all along communal factors had never determined the fate of parliamentary candidates before. The voters in this bordering district were generally divided between the Left and the Congress(I) camps. As a result, only the candidates of these parties shared success in all the past elections except for the lone Deganga Assembly seat which had returned a Muslim League candidate in 1987.

There is a change in mood this time. This is mainly because there is unequal competition with the illegal migrants from Bangladesh in securing odd jobs either in agricultural field or in urban areas. The migrants work at

half the daily wages paid to local labourers for cultivating land and ply rickshaws in towns at a cheaper rate.

In addition, the people in the border villages live under constant fear let loose by dacoits raiding houses from across the border. The cow-lifting cases are reported almost daily. A sense of insecurity fueled by communal feelings have swayed a chunk of voters in these villages towards the BJP.

Sensing the mood of the voters, the BJP activists are keeping their election campaign within the influx issue and problems created by illegal migrants. In almost all election rallies, the BJP leaders are promising to drive out all these migrants if voted to power.

Communal appeal: A subtle undertone of communal appeal may be seen in BJP's leaflets distributed in various Assembly segments under Barasat and Bashirhat constituencies which say, "Your women are raped, property looted by Bangladeshi criminals. How long will you remain silent?"

Muslims discontent: It may not be correct to say that the Hindus are only sore by the unchecked influx. The local Muslims are equally bitter as they no longer find farming jobs easily. Md. Ismail, a poor agricultural labourer complains, "How can I get a job. They (Bangladeshis) work even if the landowner pays half the daily wages." The daily wage for a labourer in this district is Rs[rupees]20.40.

Both the Left parties and the Congress(I) are finding it difficult to keep their bastions intact in the face of the BJP's stiff challenge. The party has been successful in directing the wrath of the local residents towards the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] and its allies and the Congress(I) for being ineffective in stopping the influx.

The extent of the BJP's sway can be felt at Thakurnagar, a small colony of Hindu Scheduled Caste refugees who migrated from Bangladesh in the late Fifties and early Sixties. The residents, in a recent meeting unanimously decided to vote for the BJP.

A trivial issue, cleverly exploited by the BJP, has changed the mood of the Thakurnagar voters this time. A Hindu girl married a Muslim boy a few years ago. Recently, the woman returned to her parents with two children after her husband divorced her under the Islamic marriage laws. But her parents did not accept the divorce and sought help from the local CPI(M) leaders to nullify it. The party leaders refused to interfere and advised the parents to be satisfied with Rs 500 compensation money offered by the woman's husband.

The incident created tension between the two communities and the BJP activists are cashing in on it by saying that the CPI(M) was supporting the Muslims to ensure minority votes. The residents, who are mostly disciples of the late spiritual leader, P.R. Thakur of Chhatrishgram, (Bangladesh) could be swayed by the provocating slogans of the BJP.

*Muslim Leader Opts for Janata Dal

91AS0921D Madras THE HINDU in English 4 May 91 p 9

[Text] New Delhi, 3 May: The Shahi Imam of Jama Masjid, Syed Abdullah Bukhari, today appealed to Muslims and the oppressed classes to vote for the Janata Dal candidates in the Lok Sabha elections.

Issuing the appeal at a press conference held at his office in the premises of Jama Masjid here today, he urged the people to support the Left parties where the Janata Dal had not fielded its candidates. He called upon Muslims and oppressed classes not to allow their votes to be divided and go to waste. The Imam had issued similar appeals before the 1989 elections asking people to vote for the Janata Dal, and in 1977 in favour of the erstwhile Janata Party.

While urging the people not to vote for the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the Congress(I), the Imam said where there was no candidate belonging either to the Janata Dal or the Left Parties, people should vote for the independent candidate who believed in secularism, to ensure the emergence of secularist, nationalist and democratic forces in the country. "It is better to waste the vote, but not caste it in favour of the communal forces," he said when asked what the people should do in case of the absence of even any secular independent candidate.

"In no case should the communal forces be allowed to win," he declared. Others who were present at the press conference included Mr. Mohanne Afzal, Rajya Sabha MP [member of Parliament], and son of shahi Imam—Syed Ahmed Bukhari.

Not a fatwah: The Imam made it clear that his appeal was not a fatwah (decree), as fatwahs could be issued only by the Muftis. "I am issuing this appeal not as a religious leader but as a mere servant of the people," he said. However, he said the people were not bound by his order.

On the possibility of some Muslim religious leaders extending their support to parties like the Congress(I) and the Muslim League, the Shahi Imam said he would discuss the matter with those leaders. The Imam, who personally read out some important paragraphs of the four-page appeal said after the announcement of the coming elections, senior Janata Dal leaders like Mr. V.P. Singh and Mr. S.R. Bommai, Mr. Ajit Singh, Mr. Surinder Mohan and Mr. Kishore Lal had held prolonged discussions with him.

He said that he and Mr. V.P. Singh had agreed on issues such as right to employment, implementation of the Mandal Commission report, electoral reforms, independence of judiciary, non-interference in Muslim Personal Law, representation of minorities especially the Muslims

in all advisory boards relating to employment and financial institutions, preservation of minority institutions and implementation of Gujral Committee recommendations.

The Imam said that immediately after the fall of the V.P. Singh government leaders from various parties including those of the Congress(I) Janata Dal and the then Janata Dal(S)[Socialist] had approached him for his support. But he said there was no question of supporting the Congress(I) as it had failed to keep its promises during 40 years of rule.

About extending support to the Samajwadi Janata Party, the Imam said that there was no reason to support it as it was a new party and yet to take shape.

He accused the BJP of fanning communalism in the country. The BJP had shouted slogans for Hindu Rashtra during the last elections and this time it was trying to come to power in the name of Ram—promising that it would construct Ram temple by demolishing the Babri Masjid, he said.

The Imam observed that hardly 2 percent of the total population of the country were communal, but "the BJP was taking all out measures to make more and more people communal by using money."

While stating that there was no possibility of a single political party securing absolute majority in the coming elections, the Imam said there was chance of a coalition government. He ruled out any possibility of a coalition between the BJP and the Janata Dal in future, on the basis of the assurance given to him by Mr. V.P. Singh. However, he agreed on the point that there can be a coalition of the Janata Dal and the Congress(I) "if the situation demanded."

Justifying his support to the Janata Dal, he said that Mr. V.P. Singh had tried his best to do something for the betterment of the suffering masses including the Muslims.

*BJP Slate Includes Muslims, Scheduled Castes

91AS0921B Madras THE HINDU in English 4 May 91 p 11

[Text] New Delhi, 3 May: The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] has four Muslim nominees in its final list of 479 candidates released to the press on Thursday [2 May]. Mr. Sunder Singh Bhandari, party vice-president, said they were supporting 16 Shiv Sena candidates in Maharashtra and one independent in Kerala.

Of the final figure, the BJP has put up 29 women candidates, 68 belonging to the Scheduled Castes and 34 from the Scheduled Tribes. The party is contesting eight out of 14 seats in Assam, 32 out of 48 in Maharashtra, seven out of 13 in Punjab, 41 out of 42 in Andhra Pradesh and 19 out of 20 in Kerala.

*Congress-I Seen Weakened in South

91AS0921E Madras THE HINDU in English 5 May 91 p 5

[Article by M.C. Sampath]

[Text] The southern region's share of seats in the Lok Sabha may not amount to much. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar alone, for instance, send between them 139 representatives, nine more than what the four southern States and the Union Territory of Pondicherry put together do. Yet in the absence of a decisive mandate elsewhere, the way it votes will acquire critical importance in government-forming exercises.

Explanations may vary and interpretations differ, but the fact remains that election after election, the voters in the South have been sending with remarkable consistency an overwhelmingly large number of Congressmen to fill its quota of 130 seats. Anti-Congress waves, whatever their ferocity, that have swept across the Indo-Gangetic belt (1977 and 1989) have failed to get past the Vindhyas. On the other hand, electoral waves favourable to that party, whether triggered by the yearning for stability (1980) or by the surge of popular sympathy (1984), have taken the south along their current.

The phenomenon of pronounced north-south divide that tends to surface only when an anti-congress wave operates has set many a student of psephology looking for scientific theories. Viewed empirically, if in 1977 the south did not vote with the north it was largely because the region had remained practically oblivious to the atrocities perpetrated in the name of the Emergency, let alone going through the trauma of those black days. Again in 1989, when it accounted for as many as 105 of the 195 members the Congress(I) could muster nationwide, neither of the major issues that were believed to have militated against the party—Bofors and Ayodhya—clicked with the voter in the south as much as it did with his counterpart in other regions. Somewhat intriguing, however, was his angry response to complaints of corruption at high places at the State level as evidenced by his negative vote in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Concealed in the uniformly impressive tally of seats bagged by the Congress(I) are certain factors and trends peculiar to States within the region. In Karnataka, for example, there has been a significant erosion of its electoral base over the years—the percentage of votes polled by the party has steadily declined from 71 in 1971 to 49 in 1989. In tamil Nadu, the party has had to ride piggyback either on the AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] or the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] and all the successes it has notched up in the Lok Sabha poll since the 1969 split are a sort of shared mandate. That powerful regional sentiments can swamp pro-Congress proclivities was in evidence in Andhra Pradesh when the 1984 sympathy wave that swept Mr. Rajiv Gandhi to power proved no more than a ripple against the electorate's frenzied urge to

avenge the injustice done to the Telugu Desam leader, Mr. N.T. Rama Rao, as Chief Minister, in mid-1984.

Will the south stand by the Congress(I) in the current Lok Sabha poll as solidly as it has been doing or move away from it? As far as the issues go, Mandal and Masjid—Mandir, that were primarily responsible for the collapse of the National Front Government and the unsettling of party equations it set in motion are the ones which are bound to be projected on the all-India scale.

Mandal it was that helped Mr. V.P. Singh, portrayed as a messiah of the backward classes, strike a rapport with and become acceptable to this party of the country. However, its vote winning capability cannot but be limited in the southern context, given that States like Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have had a longer historical tradition of reservation for the backward classes and the quota has been much higher than what is envisaged by the Mandal report. Also whatever be the postures the non-Janata Dal parties may have struck earlier, all major political parties have without exception committed themselves in their poll manifestos to the Mandal recommendations and in addition accepted the concept of quotas for the poorer sections among the so called forward communities. In effect, the Mandal factor has thus been neutralised. In Karnataka, the Congress(I) has the plus point of having placed a member of a backward class at the helm and Mr. S. Bangarappa true to style has been projecting the interest of the backward classes to a fault.

What could have been an electorally worrying prospect for the Congress(I)-led United Democratic Front in Kerala was averted by some deft moves to appease the Indian Union Muslim League [IUML] and bring it back into its fold when the latter appeared set to join hands with the Samvarana Samudhaya Munnani, an organisation of Mandal beneficiary communities. Although not an offshoot of Mandal, the emergence of Pattali Makkal Kazhagam, a political outfit mainly of Vanniars (a dominant backward community), as a force to reckon with has added a new dimension to Tamil Nadu electoral politics. At least in half a dozen districts it is expected to make some inroads into the votes of the two major fronts and may well throw up some surprises.

In terms of potential for changing voters' preferences, the Mandir side of the Ayodhya coin is more relevant in the overall southern region, with the Masjid side not likely to cause any major upset especially after the Congress(I) conceded the demand of the IUML that 15 August 1947, be the cut off date for the guarantee of status quo for places of worship. Having pushed itself to the centrestage of national politics on the plank of Ayodhya temple and having gained a decent presence in the ninth Lok Sabha—thanks to the one-to-one contest against the Congress(I)—the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] is going all out to secure significant electoral gains in the south on the Hindutva platform. For an organisation that has proved a total failure at the hustings in the southern States, the goal is indeed ambitious. However, in States like Karnataka and Kerala voting trends in elections at different levels do indicate that the party's base has been widening steadily. Whether the Ram Rath Yatra and the avowed struggle against what it calls "pseudo secularism" are going to pay dividends at least to the extent of getting a foothold in this region by way of sending a few representatives to the Lok Sabha is an open question.

The Congress(I) itself is not optimistic of repeating its 1989 performance in the south. While its spokesman Mr. V.N. Gadgil says the party may lose six to eight seats, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi admits to Andhra Pradesh being a difficult proposition, where a swing of just 2 or 3 percent votes is going to make all the difference. The party is banking heavily on the "stability" card against the backdrop of the crumbling of National Front and Janata Dal(S)[Socialist] governments in quick succession. It remains to be seen if in the current context its promise of a stable government would carry conviction with the electorate as much as it did in the post-1977 context.

*Tilt Toward BJP Claimed in Uttar Pradesh

91AS0921C Madras THE HINDU in English
5 May 91 p 6

[By Hassan Saroor]

[Text] If the Uttar Pradesh electorate eventually lives up to its appearance, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) should be sitting down to celebrate, for inconsiderable [as published] parts of Central and Eastern Uttar Pradesh, which hold the key to Lok Sabha elections, there is no denying a definite pro-BJP tilt, and it is significant that many of these areas have seldom in the past supported the BJP.

Among the converts are a fairly large number of traditional Congress supporters, and those who not only voted for the Janata Dal [JD] in the last elections but had also worked for its victory. In fact they are a little embarrassed, saying they would vote for the BJP. It is sheer disillusionment with other parties that has driven them to the BJP's fold. Its slogan, "sab ko dekha baar baar, hum ko dekho ek baar" [you have seen the others many times, give us a chance] seems to have worked.

A more specific reason is the widespread and seething anger with the Chief Minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav's handling of the "kar seva" [service] agitation at Ayodhya last October-November. Even people who dismiss the Mandir-Masjid controversy as "so much nonsense" are unhappy about the administration's alleged over-reaction.

"Life in places like Lucknow and Barabanki had become so difficult that it was not possible even to move about freely. Even old men out for a morning walk were picked up and jailed just because they happened to be BJP supporters, says Mr. Dhirendra Sahai, a local publisher. People in Barabanki complain of a month-long "virtual curfew" and say that their vote for the BJP would in fact be a vote against Mr. Yadav.

Some of the stories of alleged excesses could be exaggerated but it shows how effectively the BJP has been able to cash in on the October-November incidents.

The more enthusiastic supporters of the BJP give it 40 to 45 out of the 85 Lok Sabha seats, but even if this were to be reduced by half, it would be an astonishing achievement for a party which even at the height of its glory in 1989 got just eight seats—and that too under a very comfortable seat-adjustment with the National Front.

Morale high

In Lucknow parliamentary constituency, the entry of Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee so unnerved the Congress(I) at one stage that there was talk of persuading Amitabh Bachchan to take on the BJP leader. Mr. Vajpayee's decision to contest after announcing that he was not in the running is seen as an indication of the BJP's high morale. It is pointed out that Lucknow has never elected a BJP member of Lok Sabha and unless the party was sure of winning this time, it would not have risked a leader of Mr. Vajpayee's stature.

All along the Lucknow-Kanpur-belt Fatehpur on the one side and Lucknow- Barabanki-Faizabad on the other, there is quiet optimism about the BJP's prospects. Except Amethi, where the "hand reigns supreme, the BJP's visibility is high."

Even in Fatehpur where Mr. V.P. Singh is contesting, the BJP is not taking it lying down and its aggressive campaign has put the Janata Dal supporters on the defensive. Similarly in Kanpur, the CPI(M) [Communist Party India (Marxist)] sitting Lok Sabha member, Suhashini Ali, is in for a good fight. Barabanki, Faizabad and Rae Barelli, none of which ever elected a BJP member for Parliament are this time inclined to do so.

There is a view however that the BJP's apparent show of strength is restricted to urban areas, and the rural hinterland is still a virgin land. "The name of Ram has reached there but the BJP as a party is not known, so Ram may not get translated into votes," says Vishwakarma Vishwas, a doctor in Rozagaon which forms part of Barabanki constituency.

Even if the BJP does not do as well as is being claimed, one thing is clear: it would considerably improve upon its tally in the dissolved Lok Sabha, and that should be worrying the more secular and progressive sections. "The BJP which has so far been claiming that it represents the Hindu sentiment would then be able to emphasise this and flaunt its electoral legitimacy; and that would be a sad day," observes a Lucknow University teacher.

The most significant feature of the campaign so far is the invisibility of the Janata Dal. Nowhere does anyone talk about it, and its sitting members in most places are no longer favourites. If CPI(M)'s Suhashini Ali in Kanpur and CPI's [Communist party of India] Mitrasen Yadav in Faizabad—both allies of the Janata Dal—win, it would be on their own individual steam. Both are said to have considerable support among their electorate, and their alliance with the Janata Dal has little meaning. The alliance would in fact help the Janata Dal in the Assembly elections, as the communist cadre (the CPI has a large, committed cadre) and supporters would campaign for it.

The Janata Dal is reported to be short of funds this time, and even in Mr. V.P. Singh's constituency, the Janata Dal workers complain that they are handicapped for lack of enough resources. "With their main financiers having walked out, they are bound to be in difficulty," a BJP activist remarked gleefully.

The BJP on the other hand seems to be spending even more than the Congress(I), most of the supporters being businessmen.

The job reservations issue has hit the Janata Dal badly and the urban middle class is particularly angry with Mr. V.P. Singh's "insensitivity" to the spate of self-immolations that took place in Delhi and other places. Even the Barabanki, which is a reserved constituency the "kurmis"—a backward community—are not happy with the Janata Dal and the sitting Dal member Mr. Ram Sagar Rawat is all set to lose. In many places, people hurl abuses at Mr. V.P. Singh, calling him a "killer" and a "hang man."

A section of Muslims in Faizabad talks approvingly of Mr. V.P. Singh's stand on the Rama Janmabhoomi issue but the benefit of their votes would go to the Janata Dal(S)[Socialist] candidate in the Assembly elections because it was Mulayam Singh Yadav, who carried the cross for him. The Janata Dal in Faizabad is not contesting the Lok Sabha seat and has left it to the CPI.

Unless there is quiet revolution going on, the Janata Dal seems on the way out. The JD(S) does not count either in the Lok Sabha elections, though it may spring a few surprises in the Assembly poll.

The Congress(I), by all appearances, is the main challenge to the BJP and in most places the contest is between these two parties. Muslims have not yet made up their mind and it is likely that the votes will be split among Congress(I), JD and JD(S).

Pakistan's 'Provocative' Kashmir Remarks Noted

BK1505161391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] India has taken serious note of the recent provocative statements by Pakistan on Kashmir and is planning a series of steps to counter the Pakistani propaganda. According to informed sources in New Delhi, the uncertain political situation in India has apparently emboldened Pakistan Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif to state that Kashmiris should have the right of self-determination and to even invite outside interference like that in Kuwait. The sources said that such a provision is totally against the spirit of the Simla Agreement.

Nepal & Bhutan

Nepal

Nepali Congress Wins 88 of 171 Declared Seats

BK1605002891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1932 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Kathmandu, May 15 (AFP)—The Nepali Congress [NC] appeared late Wednesday on the verge of capturing a simple majority in the House of Representatives after winning 88 seats of the total 171 seats declared.

Its closest rival, the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist-Leninist) or NPC (UM-L), was trailing with 62 seats, according to the official count from Sunday's balloting for 205 parliamentary seats.

The United People's Front had eight seats, the pro-Indian Nepal Goodwill Party had five, the National Democratic Party (Chand) three, the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party two and the Nepal Communist Party (Democratic) one.

The National Democratic Party (Thapa) picked up one seat and another went to an independent.

An official said the NPC (UM-L) was negotiating with other left- wing parties, including the United People's Front, the Nepal Communist Party (Democratic) and the Nepal Workers and Labourers Party to try to form a working majority.

But a Nepali Congress source said the Congress needed just 15 more seats to form a majority. He added that the NCP (UML) had little chance of winning the 30 out of the remaining 34 seats it needed.

The balloting, the first multiparty elections here in 32 years, brought about the defeat of three former premiers under the partyless panchayat system which was toppled last year amid mass protests.

NC Wins 95, Communists 65; 23 Undeclared

BK1605051891 Hong Kong AFP in English 0458 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Kathmandu, May 16 (AFP)—The Nepali Congress was just eight seats short of the majority needed to form a government Thursday, with 23 seats still to be declared from last Sunday's general elections, officials said.

The results so far gave the Congress, the country's largest democratic party, 95 seats out of the 205 at stake, with its nearest rival, the Nepal Communist Party (United Marxist and Leninist), on 65.

A Nepali Congress spokesman said, "of the remaining results to be announced we are fully confident of winning at least 15 seats and we will emerge as the single largest party with an adequate number of seats to form the new government."

Of the other seats declared, the United People's Front had won eight, the pro-Indian Nepal Sadbhavana Party (Goodwill Party) five, the National Democratic Party (Chand) three, and the National Democratic Party (Thapa) one.

The last two parties support the panchayat system of government which was discredited and overturned as a result of popular discontent last year.

All three former panchayat prime ministers standing, most former ministers and the ex-chairman of the dissolved National Panchayat (parliament) have been defeated, either by the Nepali Congress or the NCP (UM-L).

The final results are not expected before the middle of next week, and a new government should be formed in the last week of May to prepare for the opening of the new parliament in the first week of June, sources said.

Prime Minister Discloses Likely Successor

BK1605081891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0730 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] In the Nepal general elections, the ruling Nepali Congress still needs six more seats to get a majority in the 205-member house of representatives. Of the 184 results declared so far, the party has secured 96 seats followed by the Nepal Communist party—United Marxist-Leninist with 65. Twenty-one results are yet to be declared. The position of other parties is: the United People's Front eight, the Nepal Sadbhavana [Goodwill] Party five, the National Democratic Party-Chand three, the National Democratic Party-Thapa one, Nepal Communist Party-Democratic two, the Nepal Workers and Peasants Party two and independents two.

Mr. G.P. Koirala is likely to be the new prime minister of Nepal in case the ruling Nepali Congress gets a majority. This was disclosed by the acting president of the Nepali Congress and Prime Minister Mr. K.P. Bhattarai in Kathmandu this morning. In an exclusive interview with AIR [All India Radio] Kathmandu correspondent Harish Segon, Mr. Bhattarai said that at a meeting between him and the Nepali Congress leader, Mr. Ganesh Man Singh, it has been agreed that Mr. G.P. Koirala will be the leader of the Nepali Congress Legislature Party in the House of Representatives.

Pakistan

Beg Says Rumors of Martial Law 'Baseless'

BK1605043291 Islamabad THE NATION in English 15 May 91 pp 1, 4

[From our special correspondent]

[Text] Lahore—Chief of Army Staff [COAS] General Mirza Aslam Beg has said that the rumors of a Martial Law cannot find way into the minds of the people if the

politicians fulfill their duties and ensure that the country's affairs are running smoothly.

He said similar rumours spread when the previous government was in power but that government was changed not through a Martial Law but by the way of fresh elections. "So the present rumours about a Martial Law are baseless," the COAS assured newsmen in an informal talk at the marriage ceremony of the son of Justice (Retd) Khalid Mehmood on Tuesday.

When asked to comment on Pir Pagaro's recent statement, General Beg said the Pir Sahib should try the istikhara (divining) again as "he has been talking of a double march in March and now he talks of August."

General Beg said the border situation was worsening with the deterioration of law and order in occupied Kashmir. He asserted there were no chances of an immediate war with India since India was faced with trouble at home. "However, the Pakistan Army is capable of handling any situation," he observed.

The Army Chief said he could not remain in his office after his term expired in August. Asked whether he was being appointed the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Beg maintained the appointment could prove to be of any use only if he was able to do something in practical terms while holding that office.

Responding to another question, he said the process of accountability never began in Pakistan. The present process of accountability also failed to bear any results. He said Sharia bill was being introduced to make better Muslims out of ourselves. He said it would not help the country in any other way "but improving ourselves."

About the suspension of military and economic assistance from the United States, General Beg said the American objection was not valid since they wished Pakistan to take its nuclear programme back to the stage it was in when the late General Zia ruled the country. He said the country's nuclear programme was in the same stage of development as during Ms Bhutto's or General Zia's government.

He said America had become the single major power in the world as a result of Soviet Union's losing its influence around the globe and was forcing the world to bow to its conditions.

Reiterating his stance on the recent Gulf war, he remarked: "Answer to insanity is not more insanity." He said a country had been destroyed to end its annexation of another country. When asked to comment on the open criticism of the Pakistan Government by American diplomats, he said he was the chief of an army and that it was the responsibility of the government to take notice of the violation of diplomatic ethics. He said the voicing of his opinion did not please the Americans, "though I have every right to do that."

Asked whether the general impression that the Pakistan Government and the Army differed on their Afghanistan and Kashmir policies, he stated it was not true. "There is no difference in the policies of the two. It is the government's job to frame policies. Neither America nor Pakistan can solve the Afghanistan issue. It has to be solved by the Afghan people, through—a war, compromise or negotiations."

General Beg said the suspension of American aid would not affect Pakistan's defence capability. He said Pakistan was manufacturing sophisticated weapons from machine guns to tanks at its own complexes besides missiles and other defence equipment. However, he admitted that Pakistan would face problems in acquiring parts of F-16 aircraft.

Airspace Violations by Kabul 'Strongly Protested'

BK1605032591 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] Pakistan has strongly protested the grave violations of its airspace by the Kabul regime forces. The charge d'affaires of the Kabul regime was told in Islamabad yesterday that the Kabul regime's jet aircraft violated Pakistan's airspace in Chaman and Chitral sectors at least five times during the fortnight ending the 6th of this month, and one person was killed and many others injured. Loss of property was also reported. He was told that serious consequences of these well-planned and unprovoked attacks will rest entirely with the Kabul regime.

Iranian Oil Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i Visits

Makes Arrival Statement

LD1505075591 Tehran IRNA in English 1349 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] Islamabad, May 14, IRNA—Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i heading a delegation arrived here today on a three-day official visit.

"Tehran-Islamabad relations are brotherly, and I hope this visit would serve as an important step towards further deepening of the mutual ties," Aqazadeh-Kho'i told reporters upon arrival.

The two sides are expected to ink an agreement for building a joint oil refinery at Port Qasem of Karachi, at the end of the Iranian delegation's visit.

The refinery will have a capacity of 120,000 barrels per day, and its construction is expected to cost at least 300 million dollars.

Pakistan's oil need is some 140,000 barrels per day, two third of which is imported. Iran exports daily 20,000 barrels of oil to Pakistan.

Aqazadeh-Kho'i is to hold talks with the president, the prime minister and the oil minister of Pakistan in addition to inspecting oil installations of that country.

Holds First Round of Talks

LD1505082391 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] The first round of talks between the oil ministers of Iran and Pakistan were held this afternoon in Islamabad. We draw your attention to our correspondent's report from Islamabad.

[Begin unidentified correspondent's recording] The oil minister of our country, Mr. Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, who arrived in Islamabad at noon today on a three-day official visit at the head of an economic delegation in order to hold talks with high-ranking Pakistani officials, this evening held his first meeting with the minister of petroleum and natural resources of Pakistan, Mr. Nasir Ali Khan.

In this round of talks, attended by the two countries' various deputies and experts in the fields of petroleum and natural resources, Pakistani Petroleum Minister Ali Khan, referring to the need for expansion of the two countries' ties, called for the expansion of those ties in a more tangible manner. The Pakistani petroleum minister added: The Muslim people of Iran have always been at our side during all hardships, and our people feel that the people of Iran are very close to them. But the relations between the two countries, especially in economic and commercial fields, have not achieved the necessary development. Those ties have the capacity to develop more than the existing limits.

The Pakistani petroleum minister, referring to Pakistan's oil requirements, called for various kinds of assistance, as well as the expansion of cooperation in oil matters.

Oil Minister Aqazadeh-Kho'i during the meeting, elaborating our country's economic policies—especially forming close ties with Muslim countries—said: We have a great many possibilities for expanding our ties with Muslim and neighboring states, so that by cooperation and better planning the exchanges between the countries will increase. He declared our country's readiness to export natural and liquified gas to Pakistan, referring to the commissioning of the great Badar Imam Khomeyni project, and asked for Pakistan's exact requirements in this regard.

At the end of the oil minister's first round of talks, three committees with the titles Oil Refinery Committee, Gas Committee, and Oil Exploration and Extraction Committee were set up with the participation of the two countries' experts, so that they can submit their findings to the second round of official talks between the two countries' ministers. [end recording]

Oil Export Terminal for Iran Proposed

BK1505134291 Hong Kong AFP in English 1340 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] Islamabad, May 15 (AFP)—Pakistan has invited Iran to build an oil terminal at Gwadar Port in Baluchistan for secure and economical Iranian exports to the Far East, officials said Wednesday.

Such a terminal would be an additional "safe" outlet for Iran's oil away from the Gulf, they quoted Pakistani minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan as saying.

Mr. Khan, speaking here late Tuesday at a dinner he hosted for visiting Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, said the terminal would also be economical for exporting Iranian oil to Japan and other Far Eastern destinations.

He said Pakistan would assist the terminal construction project with technical expertise and manpower.

Gwadar, on the Mekran coast some 100 kilometres (65 miles) from the Iranian border, is being developed into Pakistan's second port after Karachi.

The Iranian minister arived here Tuesday at the head of a 17-member delegation on a three-day visit expected to focus on promotion of bilateral cooperation.

Ishaq Khan Receives Iranian Minister

BK1505135091 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1300 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The visiting Iranian delegation led by the oil minister, Mr. Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, called on President Ghulam Ishaq Khan in Islamabad today. They exchanged views on economic collaboration between Pakistan and Iran. The Iranian minister said that his government was to open a new chapter of close economic cooperation and prospects were highly promising. The president expressed the hope that proposed joint ventures between the two countries would lend greater depth to their fraternal relations.

The special envoy of the president of Republic of Korea, Mr. (Quan-ku Choe) also called on the president and delivered him a message from President No Tae-u. The special envoy conveyed to the president his government's determination to expand bilateral economic cooperation. He said Korean investors will take full advantage of the improved investment climate in Pakistan. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan assured the Korean special envoy of Pakistan's full support to the efforts aimed at peaceful reunification of the two Koreas.

Discusses Bilateral Issues

LD1505171791 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The Pakistani president, in his meeting with our country's oil minister, called for the expansion of cooperation between Iran and Pakistan in the technical and energy fields. We start our news report with this issue.

Our country's oil minister, Mr. Aqazadeh-Kho'i, who is in Pakistan at the head of an economic delegation, met the Pakistani president Ghulam Ishaq Khan at noon today, and discussed with him issues of interest to the two countries.

In the meeting, the Pakistani president expressing is country's willingness to expand ties with Iran in all fields, especially technical and technological matters and said: The Iran-Pakistan oil refinery which is to be built with the two countries sharing investment and production near Karachi, besides expanding the technical and commercial ties between the two countries, can bring about a new chapter in the two countries' cooperation in advanced technology.

In the meeting, our country's oil minister, submitting a report on the level of the commercial and technical ties between the two countries, referred to the forthcoming session of the foreign ministers of the Economic Cooperation Organization of Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, ECO, which is to be held in the near future in Iran, and added: Immediately after the ECO foreign ministers's session, nine committees are to be set up to promote ECO objectives and all the dimensions of the cooperation between the three countries to be investigated, especially in the field of energy.

Iranian Meets Sharif; Refinery Agreed

BK1605032691 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 16 May 91

[Text] The prime minister has reaffirmed Pakistan's desire to have good relations with other countries, with greater emphasis on cooperation and collaboration with brotherly countries like Iran. Nawaz Sharif said this while talking to Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Reza Aqazadeh-Kho'i, who along with his delegation called on Sharif in Islamabad last night. The prime minister also expressed the desire to place Pakistan-Iran relations at a level where they will be a model for other countries. Nawaz Sharif emphasized greater collaboration with Iran in the field of energy, as that is of basic importance for development efforts.

Pakistan and Iran have agreed to set up a big oil refinery [in Pakistan] with a capacity of 120,000 barrels of oil produced by local resources a day. This was stated by Federal Production Minister Islam Nabi at a banquet hosted in honor of the visiting Iranian oil minister. The name of the refinery will be Abul Qasim Refinery in which both countries will have an equal share. The Iranian oil minister said his country is ready to give more crude oil to Pakistan. He also proposed supplying natural gas.

Editorial Notes Differences on Islamic Law Bill

BK1505105291 Islamabad THE NATION in English 14 May 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Split on Sharia Bill"]

[Text] The apprehensions voiced from various quarters about the Sharia [Islamic law] Law becoming a factor of disunity rather than of solidarity of the Muslim ummah-[Community], have unfortunately been proved right. The decision of the JUI [Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Islam] to break ranks with the LJI [Islami Jamhoori Ittehad] is the first sign of a split in the pro-government line-up. The ANP [Awami National Party], otherwise aligned with the IJI, mainly because of its alienation from the PPP [Pakistan People's Party], has now made common cause with the very PPP in a newly-emerging opposition front. Such a front, within the National Assembly is apparently not strong enough yet to challenge the overwhelming IJI majority, but the way Loyalties are shifting and fresh combinations of political forces emerging, the entire political map of the country could change beyong recognition. The first steps of those drifting away are no doubt a bit tenative but the virulence, which the debate on the Bill is capable of generating, could harden attitudes and embitter people. The JUI, for example, has decided to break with the IJI at the Centre, but not in Balochistan. Similarly, the ANP has gone over to the PPP at the Centre but not in the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province]. The Jama at-i-Islami and the JUP [Jamiat-i-Ulema-i-Pakistan] do show a lilt towards the JUI, but probably are yet undecided about the next step. If the worst comes to the worst, the IJI can still carry the Bill without the votes of the religious parties and against those of the new opposition front. But the danger there is whether the Muslim League itself can remain united in its support of the amended Bill that the State Minister of Law has tabled.

The number of those within the Muslim League, who were dismayed with the concessions that State Minister started making one after the other, to the religious parties, is not small. Their reservations about the Bill, particularly when it seems to have acquired a much more blatant theocratic tone, could become more pronounced. The more the Bill is pulled away from the basic precepts of the Father of the nation (which were clearly anti-theocratic in character) and dragged closer to the precepts of those who opposed the creation of Pakistan, the fewer would be the number of Muslim Leaguers, who would be willing to support it with a clear conscience. No sign of any such revolt is yet in evidence, but if the State Minister for Law persists in his course of appeasing the fundamentalists, it cannot be ruled out either. That it could have grave consequence for the future of the IJI, is obvious. The National Assembly could then split into

numerous warring camps. This is hardly the kind of consensus that the Prime Minister had advocated and is still striving for.

Sri Lanka

Security Forces Take Over 3 LTTE Camps 9 May

BK1105114091 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation Service in English 1045 GMT 11 May 91

[Text] Three LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] camps, including one for women terrorists and one base, were taken by the security forces on Thursday [9 May]. Five civilians, including two school girls, and four soldiers were killed by the LTTE. These were overrun during their operation against terrorists in the island of Karaitivu, west of Jaffna mainland, where the Karainagar naval base is located. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that government troops found medical equipment, uniforms, stocks of food, a laid out obstacle (?course), vehicles including several motorcycles which had been burnt as the LTTE cadres fled in the wake of the approaching troops.

The security forces overran yet another LTTE base northwest of Omantai in Vavuniya. The fleeing terrorists were engaged from there by Air Force aircraft and were reported to have suffered heavy casualties. The security forces lost three soldiers in this operation. Government troops made a haul of rifles, steel helmets, motorcycles and ambulance and 1,000 meal packets.

Meanwhile, a curfew was declared in the district of Mannar in addition to those already enforced in Mullaitivu and Vavuniya except the Vavuniya town and the southern Sinhala division.

Raid Camps in Batticaloa

BK1305115491 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0859 GMT 13 May 91

["OANA/Pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 13 May (LANKAPUVATH)—The security forces on Sunday [12 May] successfully raided two LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] satellite camps at Anandakulam in Batticaloa, eastern Sri Lanka.

One soldier was killed in the operation. Terrorist's casualties are not known.

Official sources told LANKAPUVATH that the LTTE cadres had withdrawn into the jungles surrounding the two camps.

The sources said, three terrorists were killed in an encounter with government troops at Kokkadicholai, also in Batticaloa.

Three LTTE dinghies were destroyed by the Navy on the island of Iranathivu in Batticaloa with the assistance of the Air Force, at Iranathivu, an islet off the coast of Mannar.

One fisherman was killed when LTTE terrorists opened fire at a group of fishermen at Upparu in Trincomalee, Sunday.

Four fishermen were rescued by the Navy. Two have not been accounted for.

One soldier was killed by terrorists at Irankulam in Vavuniya.

LTTE Allegedly Uses Tamils as 'Human Shields'

BK1205120691 Colombo International Service in English 1045 GMT 12 May 91

[Text] LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] used Tamil civilians as human shields when firing on security forces' forward defense line on the Vavuniya-Mannar road yesterday. Official sources told LANKAPUVATH, the firing continued for about 30 minutes from behind the civilians who were placed in front. However, government troops in consideration for the lives of civilians withheld their fire and did not retaliate.

A navy patrol boat destroyed a high speed terrorist dinghy fitted with 440 horsepower outboard motors, killing three LTTE cadres in an exchange of fire on the seas off the coast of Madugama, Jaffna. The occupants of the boat moving from Erukkilampiddi to Pesalai on the coast of Mannar were reported to have jumped overboard when a naval patrol craft approached them. The boat with the belongings of the occupants was apprehended. Special Task Force police commandos repulsed an attack by the LTTE on the base of Panankadu-Akkaraipattu in the Amparai District.

Said Using 'Man-Eating Crocodiles'

BK1405115891 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 14 May 91

[Text] An estimated 250 LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] terrorists were killed and a large number seriously wounded in the successful operation conducted by the security forces in Vavuniya. This operation began on the 2d of this month and ended yesterday. Thirty-five soldiers were killed and 17 seriously wounded in the 11 days of fighting. Official sources said that the curfew in the Vavuniya and Mannar Districts ended at 0600 [0030 GMT] today.

Official sources also told LANKAPUVATH that the government troops had discovered man-eating crocodiles in a torture chamber at the LTTE's (Romesh) jungle base north of Omantai. Prisoners, after interrogation, were fed to the crocodiles. Government troops backed by air cover captured their main objective overrunning 37th

base of LTTE's deputy leader Mahattaya. It was located in the Koliyakulam-Palamoddai area jungle. Between 60 and 100 terrorists were killed and radios and weapons were captured. The sources said that right from the beginning of the operation, ground troops were given strong support from the air by the Sri Lanka Air Force. They added that security forces had cleared Koliyakulam-Palamoddai, Rampai Kulam, Omantai, Periyavilattikkulam, and Purantankulam of the LTTE. Two major LTTE jungle bases—the (Romesh) base and the (Kadi) base had been overrun.

The Criminal Investigation Department and the police narcotics bureau have been investigating the activities of a Singapore-based Sri Lankan Tamil millionaire, who is alleged to be involved in gun running and heroin smuggling for the LTTE. Police told LANKAPUVATH that the current investigation into the activities of the wealthy businessman followed the detection of 1 kg of heroin allegedly found under his mother's bed at her home in Vellavatte during the weekend. The woman was arrested and later remanded by a Colombo magistrate. Investigations reveal that youths from the East had frequented the arrested woman's home. The suspect is reported to have said [word indistinct] had handed her the parcel for safekeeping. Police say that they were also probing the Singapore businessman's connection in an alleged international narco-terrorist racket and [word indistinct] whether the millionaire's mother's home was used as the clearing house.

Civil Authority Reestablished in Vavuniya Divisions

BK1505113691 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 15 May 91

[Text] The civil administration has been reestablished in the Vavuniya South Sinhala division and the Vavuniya North Tamil AGA [Assistant Government Agent] division of the administrative districts of Vavuniya and Mannar, Vankalai, and Mannar Island. The Education Ministry has requested all teachers from Vavuniya, who were assigned to other areas on temporary basis, to report to their permanent work places without delay.